

**WILLIAM WORDSWORTH AND ULLOOR
S. PARAMESWARA IYER: A COMPARATIVE STUDY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DIDACTICISM**

Thesis submitted to the University of Calicut
for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “William Wordsworth and
Ulloor. S. Parameswara Iyer: A Comparative Study with Special Reference
to Didacticism”, submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is a record of bona fide research carried out
by the candidate under my supervision and that no part of the thesis has been
submitted for any degree before.

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DECLARATION

I , Pradeepkumar K., part-time Research Scholar at the Research Centre for Comparative Studies in English, Mercy College, Palakkad, affiliated to the University of Calicut, hereby declare that the thesis, entitled “William Wordsworth and Ulloor. S. Parameswara Iyer: A Comparative Study with Special Reference to Didacticism”, has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title, or recognition.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I express my deep sense of gratitude and respect to Dr.Sr.Mary K.A. (alias Sr. Sheila Kannath C.M.C.), my supervising teacher, whose determination and dedication has carried me through this research work. To her I owe the inspiration to persevere.

Next, let me express my heart-felt indebtedness to the Principals and Heads of the Department of English, Mercy College Palakkad, since 2001, for their guidance and co-operation.

It is my delight to thank the Principals and Staff, K.K.M.H.S.S. Vandithavalam, G.H.S.S., Manathala and G.R.S.R.V.H.S.S., Velur for their encouragement and timely help.

My special thanks are due to the Librarians and Staff of Central Library, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan; Calicut University Library; Kerala University Library; IACIS, Hyderabad ; CIEFL, Hyderabad; Department of Malayalam, Kerala University; British Council Library, Thiruvananthapuram; Kerala Sahithya Academy,Thrissur; Library of the Research Centre for Comparative Studies in English, Mercy College, Palakkad; and Public Library ,Thrissur.

I value the service extended to me by R. Dileep Kumar, my dear friend and colleague in K.K.M.H.S.S., Vandithavalam during the initial stages of this research.

I remember fondly my father and mother for making me capable of this; my father-in-law and mother-in-law for their inspiration and staunch support; my kids for their patience and undemanding love; and Saumya, my wife, of all, for being with me all the time as a constant source of strength.

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ABSTRACT

Pradeep Kumar K. “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer:
A comparative study with special reference to didacticism” Thesis. Department
of English, Mercy College Palakkad , University of Calicut, 2009

ABSTRACT

This is an account of the part-time research on “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer: A Comparative Study with Special Reference to Didacticism.” The study is undertaken to explore the oft-felt possibility of comparison between these two poets.

The aim of this research is to determine the didactic strain in the poetry of these two poets. The four chapters are to expose and establish the veracity of this hypothesis.

Chapter 1 is a brief survey of didacticism and its manifestations in Literature. It gives a panoramic view of English and Malayalam Literature. It also probes how their respective traditions shaped the sensibilities and tastes of Wordsworth and Ulloor.

Chapter 2 presents and analyses the features of the poetry of William Wordsworth. Chapter 3 describes and analyses the poetry of Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer.

Chapter 4 reviews the findings. It brings out the subtle differences and similarities of these poets’ moral and ethical outlook as well as their poetic vision. It is an attempt to compare their poetry. This final chapter determines the common factors they share and how far didactic they are.

As the approach of the study is thematic, no attempt has been done to confine the investigation to any particular work/s of the authors, but to concentrate on the didactic elements and values they decided to impart through their poems.

Symbols used in the Transliteration of Malayalam Vowels

	Monothongs										Diphhtongs					
	Unrounded								Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded			
	Front				Mid				Back		Front Glide		Back Glide			
	Short		Long		Short		Long		Short						Long	
Close	i	ഇ	i:	ഈ					u	ഉ	u:	ഊ				
Half Close																
Half Open	e	എ	e:	ഏ					o	ഒ	o:	ഓ	ai	ഐ	au	ഔ
Open					a	അ	a:	ആ								

Symbols used in the Transliteration of Malayalam Consonants

	Stops (Plosives)								Nasals		Fricatives		Laterals		Trills		Semi vowels	
	Voiceless				Voiced								Medials					
	Un aspirated		Aspirated		Un aspirated		Aspirated											
Velar	k	ക	kh	ഖ	g	ഗ	gh	ഘ	ŋ	ങ								
Palatal	c	ച	ch	ച	ɟ	ജ	jh	ഝ	ɲ	ഞ	ś	ശ	ɽ	ഴ			j	യ
Palato Alveolar Retroflex	ʈ	ട	th	ഠ	d	ഡ	dh	ഢ	ɳ	ണ	s	ഷ	ɭ	ള	ɽ	റ		
Alveolar	t	ത							n	ൻ			l	ല	r	ര		
Dental	t	ത	th	ഥ	d	ദ	dh	ധ	n	ന	s	സ						
Bilabial	p	പ	ph	ഫ	b	ബ	bh	ഭ	m	മ								
Labio Dental											f	ഫ					v	വ
Glottal											h	ഹ						

Literature for Harmony

Pradeep Kumar K. “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer:
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Chapter I

Literature for Harmony

In the history of Literature, it has been said that there are no absolute beginnings. This can be applied to the dispute about the aim of Literature also. From very ancient times the arguments about whether Literature should have an aim have found a place in the annals of Literature. Yet it will be inaccurate to state that the dispute was there from the very beginning. Our progenitors produced Literature purely on utilitarian grounds. The earliest Literature of humanity—whether the Eastern, Greek or Hebrew—is in verse. The mnemonic power of poetry made it easy to remember the content. That may be the origin of didactic poetry.

This chapter discusses the salient features of didacticism in Literature, along with its origin, deep impact and several manifestations. After a brief discussion on the nature and function of Literature, a probe is made into the works of William Wordsworth and Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, in order to estimate how far didactic their works are and even if it were so, what are their peculiar differences and similarities.

These two poets have been chosen for study on the ground of conviction that both are great poets who firmly believe that Literature has a function to perform for humanity. Both think that the poet deals with “materials which are basic in human experience and therefore of widespread and permanent interest.”¹ They are also very influencing moralists. Wordsworth has once said: “every great poet is a teacher; I wish either to be considered as a teacher or as nothing.”² Wordsworth believed that poetry produces excitement along with an overbalance of pleasure. With his notion of pleasure as the ultimate/primary aim of poetry, he differs slightly from the neoclassicists who thought that Literature is “to instruct and delight.” But to Wordsworth, pleasure thus derived, is something deeper and substantial. It is moral in nature. According to him, poetry aims at imparting pleasure, which is caused by the strengthening and purification of crude and base emotions. Poetry makes us saner and purer than before. That is why he calls poetry the most philosophical. The poet discovers the universal moral laws and communicates them to the readers. Poetry binds together the entire humanity by passion and knowledge. Thus the poet can be called the upholder of all humanity and preserver of harmony.

Wordsworth’s poems are designed to extend the dominion of sensibility for the delight and benefit of humanity. He has an exalted

notion of his own call or mission. He considers poetry as the breath and spirit of all knowledge. According to him, poetry has its own value and significance to improve the scheme of man's existence and recast the world. When he recognizes poetry as the most philosophical of all genres of literature, he is putting forward a new philosophy. He declares that his poetry is "to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy, happier."³ He slowly moved from an adolescent enthusiasm for poetry towards a serious commitment to writing. He seeks out a readership and tries to educate them. Poetry helps to discover truth and thus to make the readers wiser and nobler. This process is pleasurable. Wordsworth insists on the overbalance of pleasure on reading a piece of Literature. But it should be combined with the scope for teaching also. He is a great moralist and his greatness in this regard lies in his uncompromising sense of duty and the supremacy of moral laws. He gives emphasis to those spiritual forces that lift man above the noisy realm of everyday life and the flux of external things. Wordsworth believes that a poet writes, not for his pleasure alone, but for the pleasure of all. But Literature is not concerned with imparting pleasure only. According to Wordsworth, poetry "is the breath and fine spirit of all knowledge, the impassioned expression that is in the countenance of all science."⁴ To be incapable of a feeling for poetry is to be without love for

human nature and reverence for God. The poetry, to be worth of the name, must serve the purpose of life and morality. Poetry divested of morality is valueless and barren.

Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer, one among the modern trio of Malayalam poetry, is a conscientious teacher of ethics and morals. To him poetry is undoubtedly a vehicle of sound ethical and moral thoughts. He firmly believes that poets are the reformers of the world and poetry is the solution to the problems of life: “Ulloor chose to sing the saga of action with a view to promote the ideal of universal brotherhood of man.”⁵ The sheer poetical quality alone saves his works from inevitable doom. They are very much laden with maxims, refrains, guidelines and pious invocations. In spite of all these, he is a poet par excellence, whose elegance and style have not yet been outshone. Of all Malayalam poets, Ulloor stands out as an accomplished didactic poet. He wrote a number of poems delineating those values, cherished by the great sages of ancient India. He never wasted an occasion to enlighten the readers:

guṇattinatre ma:ha:tmjam

kulattinalla ke:valam;

pu:vil cilappo:l ka:ṇmi:le

puṛu po:lum Janippata:j?⁶

(Count the man by his virtues, not by his clan

For the worms are bred in flowers often)

He lauds the virtuous:

cevikju cevija:j lo:kam - s_ravikjum guṇi taṇ guṇam

ka:ttin vaṛikju pa:ñji:ṭum – kaitappu:maṇamennume . . . ⁷

(The name of the virtuous shall spread

Like the fragrance from a flowerbed)

The media of any literary discourse are meaningful words. Words communicate ideas—good or bad. When a man writes something, he is communicating something: some ideas or exhortations or experiences. In such a wider sense any literary work is didactic. For instance Milton's Paradise Lost is didactic in a sense, because it was written to 'justify the ways of God to men.' Even though didactic strain is discernible in any work of art, the label is rather exclusive. From time immemorial, man was in search of a beautiful and livable world. From the very first musings — however abstract and aberrant had they been—the unknown artists gave vent to their feelings and communicated their ideas. They had many a good reason to impart their findings and thoughts to others. Whether it is about the omnipotence of a presence or the coming of an evil spirit, they resort to art to represent them in a more permanent mode or medium. T.S.Eliot writes in this regard:

Poetry may have deliberate, conscious social purpose. In its more primitive forms this purpose is often quite clear. There are, for example, early runes and chants, some of which had very practical magical purpose—to avert the evil eye, to cure some disease, or to propitiate some demon. Poetry is early used in religious ritual, and when we sing a hymn we are still using poetry for a particular social purpose. The early forms of epic and saga may have transmitted what was held to be history before surviving for communal entertainment only: and before the use of written language a regular verse form must have been extremely helpful for the memory⁸

Thus we can safely assume that the very first Literature of all the people/culture in the world was didactic in nature. Literature, like any other form of art, is a representation of life. Since it is so, it is a painful quest for a better life. The inspiration to make this life more livable kindled the imagination of the ancient bards—no matter whether it was in the remote Greece, on the banks of River Indus or in the deserts of ancient Babylon. Thus the earliest Literature is didactic if nothing else. Any man of letters who has the intention of doing the world some good—as Keats has put—is didactic. Eliot endorses this view like this: “I suppose it will be agreed that every good poet, whether he is a good poet

or not, has something to give us besides pleasure: for if it were for only pleasure, the pleasure itself could not be of the highest kind.”⁹

Instruction is one of the chief aims of Literature of all age and land. The ancient aesthetics acknowledges usefulness as one of the attributes of a good work of art. Aesthetically viewed, didactic poetry can be considered as the first stage in the evolution of literary forms.

Then what exactly is didactic poetry? By a general agreement or definition, it is a quality of Literature being instructive, particularly in ethical and moral matters. Several definitions themselves show the range and significance of the term.

“Didactic poetry is poetry used as a medium for teaching, embodying information about morals, religion, agriculture, history etc,” says C.M.Ing.¹⁰ According to M.H. Abrams, “The adjective ‘didactic’ which means ‘intended to give instructions’ is applied to works of Literature which are designed to expound a branch of theoretical or practical knowledge.”¹¹ In Harry Shaw’s words, “Didacticism means the practice of art or science of providing instructions. In Literature, didacticism refers to the use of writing for teaching, for offering guidance in moral, religious and ethical matters”.¹² “Didactic poetry is poetry which is primarily intended to instruct. Most commonly the label is used for poetry that teaches a moral. It can also refer to poetry which conveys

factual information like astronomy, mathematics, or rhetoric; or systematic philosophy,” says Alex Preminger.¹³ To Collingwood, “didactic poetry (Gk *didaskein*—to teach) is that which openly expresses its intention to convey knowledge or instruction.”¹⁴ Another definition runs like this:

Since not every writer who hopes to teach (sway one to specifications) announces his intention, and since in any case the purpose must be judged from the work, a further application of the term has been suggested: if it seems that the idea existed before the form, the work is didactic; if the form before the idea, the work is precious; if the form and idea took shape together, the work is art. Thus ‘didactic’ may be used (1) as a subjective and a usually derogative term; (2) to mark an all embracing characteristic;(3) to describe a kind or category of work.”¹⁵

Thus a literary work expounding some moral, political or any other kind of teaching is called didactic. All poetry instructs us either by delighting or not. But to label them all didactic is to make didacticism work through very round about channels, says C.M Ing.¹⁶ At the same time we must not ignore the fact that didactic strain is latent even in imaginative Literature. A widely accepted conception is that didactic

poetry is inferior to other forms of Literature. But there are so many degrees of didacticism in Literature as A.F. Scott points out: "We may turn from George Eliot, the 'interpreter of philosophical ideas' to Cowper who recommended private tuition at home."¹⁷ Thus didacticism or didactic poetry demands a very deep and extensive study.

A lot has been thought and written about the function and aim of Literature. One cannot forget the fact that the powerful war cry, 'art for life's sake' and the reply, 'art for the sake of art', constitute perhaps one of the most illustrious chapters in the History of Literature. There are three schools of opinion in this regard.

Firstly there is the didactic school, which emphasizes the instructive quality of Literature. In didactic works idea is given prominence. It rejects the perfection of form as well as the aesthetic experience. "Pleasure is merely the avenue and sign of their proper functioning; a by-product, not the goal."¹⁸ The primary function and quality of Literature is imparting knowledge. A grave concern over the function of Literature or work of art is not a recent development. From the time of Homer and Hesiod we can trace a difference of opinion in this regard. Both of them regarded poetry as the product of divine inspiration. "For Homer its (poetry) function is to give pleasure, for Hesiod, to give instruction, to pass on the message breathed into the poet by Muse."¹⁹.

This difference of opinion is the first phase of a quarrel that has persisted for the ages to come. From that age, these two sets of opinion are running parallel through the History of Literature: the argument that any work of art may instruct man and the opinion that Literature can have no aim other than to please. The didactic school emphasizes the instructive quality of Literature.

Poets traditionally held their mirrors up to nature not simply to reflect it but to occasion reflection and right action in their readers. Poet as teacher and reader as disciple: the roles are clear from Horace's obiter dicta, maxims and specifically literary advice to Wordsworth's remark to Sir George Beaumont that 'every poet is a great teacher—I wish to be considered as a teacher or as nothing.' Poets have appropriated to themselves the sacred obligation of preparing a citizenry, a prince, an individual conscience for life in this world.²⁰ Modern critic Martha Nussbaum has a new perspective about the didactic element of Literature when she says that "a novel, just because it is not our life, places us in a new moral position that is favourable for perception and it shows us what it would be like to take up that position in life."²¹

The didactic poet gives importance to the idea or the message and not to the embellishments. They reject perfection of form as well as the aesthetic experience resulting from reading as secondary. Didactic poetry

is more concerned “with moral instruction and practical and philosophical information than with imaginative purposes.”²² But it can be entertaining too. Thus it follows that poets have the historically sanctioned roles as teachers.

The dictum, ‘art for the sake of life’ was countered by the powerful war cry, ‘art for the sake of art.’ Those who stood for ‘art for the sake of art’ school had altogether different notions and concepts about the nature and function of Literature. Even though this school of thought gained prominence only in the nineteenth century, it has roots in literary antiquity. As we have seen already, Homer and Hesiod differed in their opinion about the function of poetry in particular. According to Homer, function of poetry is to provide pleasure, produced by some sort of enchantment and he stresses this point again and again. Later on, the argument was developed from this function of pleasure to no function at all:

A movement that developed in Europe in the second half of 19 century that insisted on the separation of art from morality or to put this another way, that insisted that art need not be moral to have value. “*L’art pour l’art*” (Art for art’s sake) was the rallying cry for writers who valued art for its

inherent aesthetic quality rather than for its didactic potential.²³

Aestheticism is a philosophy of art and an artistic movement with an explicit “point of view that art is self sufficient, need serve no ulterior purpose, and should not be judged by moral, political, or other non-aesthetic standards.”²⁴

German romanticists like Kant, Schiller and Schelling, and French writers Gustav Flaubert, Baudelaire, Mallarme and Verlaine were the early leaders of this movement. They all had agreed that art must be autonomous. Theophile Gautier wrote in his “Preface” to Mademoiselle de Maupin that art has no utilitarian value.

Aestheticism was a stage in the evolution of the Romantic Movement. Oscar Wilde was the ringleader and Walter Pater was the illustrious philosopher of aesthetic movement in England. Pater felt that:

The appreciation of art must be fresh, personal and direct; this means that the reader, observer or listener had to discard not only all preconceptions about standards of taste but all philosophical preconceptions as well.²⁵

Algernon Swinburne, Arthur Symons and Lionel Johnson were a few of the leaders of the English Aesthetic Movement. According to them a work of art has no why; it simply exists in its formal perfection. Mc

Neil Whistler, a representative of this trend in the fine arts, wrote: “Art is selfishly occupied with her own perfection only and has no desire to teach.”²⁶ Art never expresses anything other than its own independent organism. Modern critics go further to degrade moral or ethical elements depicted in Literature:

We have seen how modern critics—Fredric Jameson, Paul de Man, J. Hillis Miller—have tended to treat ethical themes as ‘diversionary’ or as ‘displacements.’ Similarly in Wordsworth’s Poetry 1787-1814, the most influential study of Wordsworth in this past quarter century, Geoffrey Hartman tend to treat ethical as well as naturalistic categories as ‘displacements’...²⁷

There is another school of thought, which takes a rather compromising stance. In their view true Literature both ‘instructs and delights.’ From Horace to Coleridge a great many scholar and writer hold this view. The great masters of Indian poetics, Anadavardhana and Pandita Jagannatha were of this opinion. Bhamaha talks about the poetic pleasure (*priti*) devoid of which poetry will be a mere matter of fact narration. Such a composition, he says, will bring in fame, wealth or knowledge of ethics, but will fail the test of poetry. To the Indians this was also an aim of Literature. Anyhow those who proffer this theory feel

that the line demarcating these two functions is too thin. Let us conclude this discussion with the words of Horace: "Poets aim either to benefit, or, to amuse, or to utter words at once both pleasing and helpful to life."²⁸

Throughout the History of Religions and Civilizations, we see sages and saints, seers and prophets, saviours and incarnations who taught, directed and supervised others. For this they resorted to scriptures and books, later came to be regarded as holy books.

All the Sacred Literature of ancient civilizations is a set of moral codes put forth in beauteous verse. The Hebrew Scriptures, The Bible, Gnostic Utterances of Scandinavia and Britain, The Vedas, The Upanishads and the Mahabharata of ancient India, the charms in Anglo-Saxon verse etc. are versified observations of natural, social and moral worlds. Learning in India through the ages had been prized and pursued not for its own sake, but for the sake of religions and as a part of religious instruction. It was sought as a means of salvation or self realization as the means of highest end of life, viz. 'mukti' or emancipation.

The Hindu Literature of ancient India never concealed its real aim. At the very beginning of Bhagavata Purana, one of the major eighteen puranas attributed to Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa, it is stated: "what other scripture is there which secures as this does, the immediate and

permanent presence of the Lord in the hearts of His sincere devotees?”²⁹

It also describes Bhagavata as the fruit of the wishing tree and The Veda which has sipped down from the mouth of Suka (the parrot) as the pure nectar of immortality.

Rig Veda, the oldest known Literature of the world, also makes use of the power and beauty of verse to drive home the wisdom and truth of the seers of that age. In the Rig Veda, for example, the sky is treated as the father and the earth as the mother of all created things: “Sweet be our father heaven (sky) to us.”³⁰

The word ‘Upanishads’ implies an esoteric teaching. Upanishads are surely among the world’s most influential creative works. Valerie J. Roebuck remarks that an “Upanishad recounts one or more sessions of teachings, often setting each within the story of how it came to be taught.”³¹ Knowledge is imparted, disguised in the form of story/fiction. This seeking of knowledge is “to attain fearlessness” to cross beyond sorrow and to dig up the supreme treasure:

Suppose good lad, that some one were to lead a man blindfold from Gandhara and then release him in a deserted place; and suppose that he were to be blown to east,north,south or west, crying, “I have been led blindfold and released blind fold.”

And suppose that someone were to undo the blindfold and tell him, “Gandhara is in this direction. Walk in this direction.” and he being wise and intelligent, by asking from village to village, would reach Gandhara. In the same way, a person who has a teacher knows, “it is only so long until I am released. Then I will reach my goals.”

This subtle part is what all this has as self. It is truth: it is the self. You are that, Svetaketu.³²

According to Dr. Deussen, he who has attained the conviction “I am Brahman” attains the final salvation. This knowledge is not the means of liberation, but liberation itself.³³

In The Mahabharata God is pictured as the Father of all creatures:

Mountains are his bones. Earth is the flesh, sea is the blood, sky is his abdomen. Air is his breath, Agni is his Teja, rivers are nerves. The sun and moon, which are called Agni and Soma, are the eyes of Brahman. The upper part of the sky is his head, Prithvi (earth) is his feet and Disa(directions) are the hands.³⁴

The Bhagavat-Gita (The Celestial Song/The Song Divine) is a similar one, composed to educate people about the many births and deaths of man, supreme importance of one's duty and also to make them realize the

value of service rendered without expectation of rewards. A beautiful couplet reminds the devotees of the intention behind the incarnation of Lord Vishnu:

jada: jada:hi dharmasja
 gla:nirbhavati bha:rata
 abhjutha:namadharmasja,
 tada:sma:nam sraJa:mjaham.³⁵

(O descender of Bharat! whenever dharma is threatened and
 adharma is on the rise, there will incarnate I.)

The Gita is full of spiritual instructions and information: “he with whom the world is not annoyed, and who is not annoyed by the world , who is free from self esteem, envy, fear and anxiety is dear to me.”³⁶

The Bhagavad-Gita gives the picture of God, the Omnipresent in nature:

I am the essence of the waters,
 The shining of the sun and the moon;
 OM in all The Vedas,
 The word that is God.
 It is I who resound in the ether
 And am potent in man.
 I am the sacred smell of the earth,

The light of the fire,

Life of all lives,

Austerity of ascetics.³⁷

The fundamental principles of prophets like Jesus Christ and Mohammed were disseminated among the masses by means of appealingly beautiful literary forms. The prowess of The Bible as a beautiful literary work can never be overstated. Here are the most famous starting lines of Genesis I:

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said. "Let there be light", and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated light from the darkness. God called the light the day and the darkness he called night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.³⁸

The sheer beauty of these lines can never be overlooked. One tends to believe that this beauty and power of words might have helped to drive the instructions home to the billions, down the history lane. Grierson lauds the literary and aesthetic elements in Literature thus:

Is anything again in Shelley (or in the passage I shall cite from Milton) more lyrical than that passage in the twenty seventh chapter of what is generally now known as the Second Isaiah? —“The spirit of the lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the poor;”³⁹

In The Bible, valuable lessons are incorporated: “But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who mistreat you, so that you will become the sons of your Father in heaven (The Gospel of St. Matthew: 2).⁴⁰

The exhortations are direct and rendered in beautiful and poetic language:

And now my children listen to me;
Happy are those who keep my ways
Hear instruction and be wise,
And do not neglect it.

(Proverbs 8:32-33)⁴¹

“The Psalms” abounds with poetic entreaties upholding divine majesty and human dignity:

O Lord, our sovereign,
How majestic is your name in

All the earth!

(Psalm 8.9) ⁴²

Budhism also heavily depended on Literature to spread its ideals like non-violence, dharma and the eightfold path to salvations. The biography of Sri Buddha, Sribudhacharitham, is an excellent example. Prophet Zoroaster and great philosophers Lao-Tze and Confucius are a few others who are to be mentioned here because they also understood the power of written words and used it to appeal to the human heart.

The Secular Literature of antiquity also abounds in didactic works. First traces of didactic poetry can be seen in Greece where poems were written on husbandry, snakes and snakebites, medicine, agriculture, precious stones etc. Hesiod was perhaps the most noted didactic poet in ancient Greece. His works mingle all the heterogeneous types of teaching in Greek poetry—practical, scientific, moral, religious and historical. His Works and Days mingles moral instructions with advice on farm work. Theogony, another work of Hesiod, is an account of the Gods and creation. Empedocles and Opian wrote in verse—former Physics and latter History of Animals. “Neither were poets—the one was an historian of nature, the other a sort of biographer of beasts.”⁴³

Roman works De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of Things) by Lucretius and Georgics by Virgil outshone the Greek didactic poets.

Their poems were practical advice interspersed with fine poetry. Virgil wrote four books of georgics covering topics like ploughing, sowing, weather signs, trees, vines especially grape and olive, farm animals and bee keeping. It was like a hand book for the farmers giving them advice like: “now is the time for weave of bramble wands/the supple basket, now to dry your corn/and crush it with a stone”⁴⁴ But Virgil’s poetry was fine and beautiful even when dealing with these dry-as-bone subjects. It lures the reader with its sheer poetical beauty: “My muse sweet dalliance held and youthful bold/I sang thee Tityrus, in beech-tree shade.”⁴⁵ Those who esteem him as a great poet who wrote Aenid will find it hard to conceive the fact that he wrote such practical things:

He was intend upon fusing a prosaic subject into poetry, and succeeded where the metaphrasists had failed. His poem is so perfect in its verse so charming in its digressions and so stately in its serious portions that it transcends its lowly subjects.⁴⁶

Francis Bacon says that, among the ancestors, the aim of epic poetry had been that of instruction. He says that poetic process conduces to, “magnanimity, morality and delectation; and in general it has an uplifting effect [...]”⁴⁷

It is already seen how two ancient Greeks, namely, Homer and Hesiod regarded poetry and its function. In the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., many philosophers like Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Pindar and Democritus made further contributions to these discussions. Xenophanes, for instance, censured Homer's views on moral and ethical grounds. Theagenes and Anaxagoras contradicted to this and stood for an allegorical interpretation of Homer. They argued that then (i.e. as allegory) poetry contains moral and scientific truths. Aristophanes in his famous play, The Frogs depicts a judgment scene in which the soundness of political advice imparted by Aeschylus and Euripides are weighed to find out who is the best dramatist of the two.

Plato's attack on poets and poetry is well known. But not equally well known is the fact that he had very particular reasons for that and he did it in particular contexts.

In the Republic where his so-called attack is fully developed, his main preoccupations are political rather than artistic. He banishes Literature and the arts because they have no political utility and may indeed exert an adverse influence on the particular virtues that must be fostered for the maintenance of his ideal commonwealth.⁴⁸

In Book III of the Republic, Plato is concerned with the education of the guardians of commonwealth. He classifies their literary education under three heads: theological, moral and formal. But for that he finds the existing poetry unsuitable, as it will have a bad effect on the minds of the young. He welcomes poetry that direct the citizens or individuals to the paths of virtue and truth and that promoted the welfare state. What Plato conceives as ideal poetry has ideal forms of justice, truth and beauty as subject matter. It deals with what is great and noble in human nature. He detests that poetry which lures the reader into a state of frenzy.

Aristotle's approach to Literature is aesthetic rather than moralistic. Throughout Poetics he discusses the factors that contribute to produce the technically finest tragedy. But like his teacher, he also thinks about the role that mimetic poetry can play in the education of the future leaders. Moreover by the notion of catharsis of such emotions like pity and fear, he means a restoration of these or like emotions to the right proportions. While putting forward such a concept, he is emphasizing the pragmatic values of Literature or art.

In the middle ages didactic Literature gained prominence in all languages. The Drama, of all, propounded religious and moral principles and teachings. This was done chiefly in Europe adapting stories and situations from The Bible. The Miracles Plays and Morality Plays of

England belong to this genre. In Morality Plays characters were the personifications of various virtues and vices. “Everyman” and “The Castle of Perseverance” are two well-known examples. Medieval theology brought in a new vitality to the discussions about the nature of reality and a new urgency to the questions as to what conduces to spiritual and moral health. Much philosophical and moral thinking were channelled into the concentration on the role of the fallen and redeemed mankind in a divinely created and directed universe. St. Augustine, a profound theologian of Christian Church, alleged that poets and dramatists attributed vicious behaviour to gods “to the end that there might be sufficient authority, for men to commit all filthiness by.”⁴⁹ The Christian Church was at war with pagan Literature, which was sharply distinguished from Christian Scriptures.

Romance of the Rose, a great allegory of love and virtues of the middle ages, moral poems like “Cleanliness”, and “Patience” and a beautiful allegory The Pearl are a few of the early didactic works in English Literature. The Romance of the Rose to which Chaucer and some other contemporary poets looked back for guidance, was a storehouse of miscellaneous learning and moral philosophy. In the first part the poet reaches a garden, on the enclosing walls of which are painted personifications of the chief enemies of love and life: Vices like Hate,

Villainy (including bad manners, the opposites of courtliness), Covetousness, Avarice, Envy, Hypocrisy and ills as Sorrow, Old Age etc.

Another remarkable work is The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman by William Langland in which the visions of the poet himself-11 of them-are depicted. The second vision is relatively important in which the seven Deadly Sins repent and set out to make confession; but on the way, gluttony is tempted into an alehouse. "The penitents go on to seek Truth, that is God the Father, but no one knows the way until Piers the Plowman puts his head and offers to guide them."⁵⁰ Piers the Plowman is transfigured into the person of Christ himself.

The famous Renaissance critic Sir Philip Sidney places Poetry as superior to History and Philosophy as it moves and inspires men to nobler actions. The aim of poetry is delightful instruction, not the one or the other. Poetry, with an elevating influence on human soul, conveys knowledge and ethics. Sidney believes that poetry, as such does not merely give us knowledge of virtue, but moves us to virtuous deeds. In his monumental work, Defense of Poesie (Apologie for Poetrie-1595), Sidney makes it clear that poets are the first purveyors of knowledge, our 'fathers in learning.'⁵¹

Like Sidney, Spenser also holds the view that the true end of poetry is 'delightful teaching.' He conceived his Faerie Queene as a textbook of morals and manners for the nobles and the gentles. The 'eternal war of good and evil' is the theme of the Faerie Queene. Moral allegory is the backbone of the poem. "Allegory was no new thing in Literature but had been used abundantly in religious Literature both apologetically and for edification," says Herbert Grierson.⁵² Spenser's The Shepheardes Calendar is also didactic in purpose. The recurring themes of his poetry are: Protestantism, Nationalism and Imperialism. Sidney also tried his best to unify the protestant powers against Rome. But his poetry does not tell it as Spenser's. Phineas and Giles Fletcher were two brothers who followed Spenser, the allegorical and religious poet. The former's The Purple Island modelled on the Faerie Queene, is on human physiology. Giles Fletcher wrote a vast book named Christ's Victory and Triumph, in Heaven and Earth, over and after Death which depicted the life of Jesus Christ.

The 17th century saw a great attack on the Literature of restoration period. The profane, lewd, irreligious works of art were criticized severely and this shed some light on the contemporary concept of the function of Literature. Jeremy Collier who wrote the famous work Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, observed:

The business of Plays is to recommend Vertue and discountenance of vice; to shew the Uncertainty of Humaine Greatness, the sudden turns of fate and the unhappy conclusions of violence and injustice: 'Tis to expose the singularities of pride and fancy, to make Folly and Falsehood contemptible, and to bring everything Ill under Infamy, and Neglect.⁵³

Sir John Vanbrugh refutes charges of licentiousness and argues that it is the business of comedy to advise spectators and tell what they should do and what they should not do by showing it all on the stage.

Alexander Pope's Essay on Criticism and Essay on Man are direct didactic verse compositions, on Literary Criticism and Moral Philosophy respectively. His Essay on Criticism instructs poets in their art like Horace's Ars Poetica and Boileau's Art Poetique. This classical age saw the birth of the greatest allegory of all times, Gulliver's Travels. It was an age of teaching. A number of poets wrote georgics, expounding such utilitarian arts like shepherding, running sugar plantations and making cider. No doubt, their model was Virgil. "Art of Preserving Health" by Armstrong and "Cyder" by Philip are fine examples. 'Botanic Garden,' a fine poem written by Charles Darwin provides a lot of information on the subject.

Dr. Johnson, the magisterial critic laid down clear precepts for poets. Poets have to obey certain guidelines to create good poetry. The old philosopher Imlac in his novel Rasselas, who is his mouthpiece, says:

He (the poet) must divest himself of the prejudices of age and country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; . . . He must write as an interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as being superior to time and place.⁵⁴

The epithets like, ‘interpreter of nature’ and legislator of mankind anticipate Wordsworth and Shelley. If a poet gives importance to the ‘poetic’ aspects at the cost of the ‘moral, social or religious’ element, then the poem has no relevance as a work of art. Dr. Johnson was of the opinion that a poet’s first work is to find a moral, which is to be illustrated and established later in the work. The poet uses his vast knowledge to enforce the moral and religious truths. He declares categorically, “The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing.”⁵⁵

William Cowper, known as the poet of quiet rural and domestic life was also a didactic poet. He was an Evangelical preacher, who valued doctrines and morals. He was also a patriot and a staunch Whig who stood for liberty and order. His Tirocinium or Review of Schools was typically didactic, written in recommendation of home tuition.

According to Matthew Arnold, the illustrious Victorian critic, poetry is the criticism of life and its main function is to solve the question-how to live? "The noble and profound application of ideas to life," he says, "is the most essential part of poetic greatness."⁵⁶ John Ruskin prescribes a three fold function of Literature: to enforce the religious sentiments of men; to perfect their ethical state; to do them material service. Pleasure is a mere avenue and a by-product, which ensures that these functions are well performed. To Ruskin, art is subservient to morality. Art is to teach what is noble. The proper character of art is to be teaching agencies—to instruct is their function. Art should be didactic to the people. Like Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle also believes that art should promote religion and morality. Carlyle was a true representative of the Victorian Era, during which art was infused with didactic messages, more than ever before.

Marxists view Literature as an effect of social cause as well as a cause of social effect. According to Robert Con Davis and Ronald

Achleifer, Marx and Engels defined art as a form of social consciousness. Therefore, it follows that the reasons for its changes should be sought in the social existence. Literature should serve the cause of the downtrodden and the destitute. It must have the aim of propagating the need for a change in the social set up in favour of the poor and the exploited.

Modernism discarded the idea that Literature has a function to perform. Works with any kind of moral aim or tone are derided and are considered as lowly. At the same time there is a change in the concept of didactic poetry. Poetry expressing social concerns is broadly called didactic. Eliot has made it clear in his “Social Function of Poetry”. Works of Literature that depict race-relations, racial conflicts, religious tolerance and harmony and war protests contain an element of ideology in them and they are primarily propagandistic. The modern drama, especially the post war drama and its fore runners recognize and utilise the rich scope and vast possibilities of their medium. The angry young men—John Osborne, Allan Sillitoe and Kingsley Amis—Harold Pinter, Arnold Wesker and John Arden have put up strong rebellion against the trends and tendencies of the age. Of these writers, Arnold Wesker goes on for direct moralization in his Trilogy, Chickensoup with Barley, I’m Talking about Jerusalem and Roots. Allen Ginsberg’s anti-Vietnam-War poems,

Levertov's anti-nuclear arms poems and Adrienne Rich's feminist poems are a few examples to mention.

It was the custom and convention in ancient Sanskrit Literature to state the aim and purpose of a work at the beginning of the work. The masters like Bhamaha, Rudrata, Vamana, Kuntaka, Mammata, and Bhojaraja had kept this tradition in their works. According to Bharata, drama is an instrument to achieve virtue (*dharma*) and benefaction. It enriches the intellect and imparts instruction (*lokopadesa*). Bhamaha in his treatise, "Kavyalamkara" insisted that a good piece of poetry, besides giving fame and pleasure, should make the reader the master of all arts and facilitate the realization of the four aims of human life viz. *dharma* (virtue), *artha* (wealth), *kama*(desire) and *moksha*(salvation). All the masters after Bharata only reiterated and reinstated what he propounded; but of course with some additions of their own. Rudrata, for example, added elimination of suffering, averting trouble, deliverance from diseases and achievement of desired boon as aims of poetry. Those enlisted by Kuntaka are: the knowledge of the code of conduct, mental exhilaration and spiritual illumination. Mammata had before him a detailed list of the functions of Literature as envisaged by various rhetoricians from Bharata to Kuntaka and he compiled them thus:

Poetry is for achieving fame, wealth and

Knowledge of code of conduct, for the removal

Of the evil, attaining instantaneous

Highest bliss and imparting instructions

As sweetly as does anyone's beloved to him.⁵⁷

This has been generally the view accepted by almost all the Indian masters.

But then Indian Literature is not of a monolithic structure. It has so many divisions and varieties as there are so many languages and cultures prominent in India. In all the myriad branches of Indian Literature a new vigour and awakening was visible by the dawn of 19th century. The latent force behind this was an intense desire for political freedom and social independence. It was precipitated by many developments and events in the political and social spheres.

Along with these, the newly introduced English education, work of the reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Eswar Chandra Vidya Sagar and others, the influence of various political ideologies like Communism and Socialism, and the influence of movements like Romanticism that spread here as a result of the deep interaction with English Literature, worked together and prepared the ground for the rising of a new, progressive group of litterateurs.

Romanticism and Realism worked hand in hand to produce a penchant for social criticism in the works of the prominent writers of that time. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Subrahmania Bharati, Iqbal, Sarat Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore are a few to name. Among the writers of 20th century, writers like Mulk Raj Anand and Yaspal are known as progressive writers as they wrote for the downtrodden and the marginalized. They firmly believe that Literature cannot and should not exist in ivory towers away from the daily struggle and stress of ordinary human beings. Raja Rao and Nissami are a few of the socially committed writers of the time. Any way the great struggle for independence was a binding force that gave a sense of direction to Indian Literature. Mahatma Gandhi and his *ahimsa dharma* inspired writers across the length and breadth of Indian peninsula. The nascent and reformatory ideals, national awakening, patriotic feelings, love and pride in the rich tradition and heritage of India, produced great works which exhorted Indians to rise and fight for freedom.

By the end of 19th century, all these traits were more or less visible in Malayalam Literature also. Until then Malayalam Literature was in a state of stupor, dreaming of the bygone glorious days. "Malayalam Literature reached the heyday of its glory during the period of Thunchath Ezhuthachan, who lived and wrote in the fifteenth century," writes Prof.

N.K Seshan.⁵⁸ Breadth of vision, simplicity of diction and seriousness of expression are the characteristics of Malayalam Literature during that period. Like all other languages in childhood, Malayalam also borrowed profusely from the myths and legends and the folklore. These works were naturally didactic. Thunchath Ezhuthachan, the father of Malayalam, wrote great works like “Adhyatma Ramayanam”, “Mahabharatham Kilippattu”, etc, which are considered as sacred books by Keralites. These books contain moral, religious and ethical teachings. Cherussery wrote “Krishnagatha” in pure Malayalam, stating his aim as to inculcate devoutness and spirituality in the readers. Kunchan Nambiar who was the third member of the earlier triad of Malayalam poetry, laughed at the follies and foibles of the contemporary society. The manipravalā Literature, the kilippattu works on Gods and festivals, verse works on Mathematics, Astronomy and Philosophy etc. were typical didactic works.

As mentioned earlier, a new awakening was visible in Malayalam Literature in the last lap of nineteenth century. As Prof. N.K.Seshan observes:

A new movement became necessary because of the failure of the earlier movements to achieve new goals in the realm of Malayalam poetry. The time had come ripe for a new type of

poetry of imaginative fecundity, emotional intensity and linguistic simplicity.⁵⁹

It was at this juncture, Asan, Ulloor and Vallathole entered the scene. They imparted a new life to Malayalam Poetry.

Vallathole Narayana Menon wrote patriotic songs, which added vigour to the freedom struggle. His poems contained patriotic strains and exhortations to fight for the freedom of the motherland. For Kumaran Asan poetry was a vehicle for social and cultural reforms. duravastha by Asan was a powerful tirade against caste system and untouchability.

The progressive movement in Malayalam Literature caused a hitherto unknown shift in theme in all branches. The rise of downtrodden classes into prominence was reflected in Literature also. The progressive or leftist writers went deep into the lives of the destitute and interpreted the existing social milieu from that perspective. M.P.Paul and Kuttippuzha Krishna Pillai were eminent critics who argued that Literature must be for the benefit of the society. Changampuzha Krishna Pillai, Kesavadev, Kesari.A.Balakrishna Pillai, Thoppil Bhasi, Cherukadu, Prof. O.N.V.Kurup and Vayalar Ramavarma are a few of the leaders of this movement. They believe that art has an aim to fulfill. According to them all, artists must be committed to the society. The novels, o:tajil ninnu (From the Gutter), of Kesavadev and muttaṣṣi

(Grandmother) of Cherukadu depicted the poverty and squalour of the contemporary society. Poets Vayalar Ramavarma, P. Bhaskaran, and O.N.V Kurup are known as 'Communist Trio'. They dedicated their songs to the cause of the down trodden and the exploited. Poets like Vyloppilly and Olappamanna attacked the social inequalities and evils. niy alenne kamju:nista:kki (You made me a Communist) a play written by Thoppil Bhasi was a fierce attack on Feudalism and discrimination based on caste. Thus Malayalam has a rich tradition of being socially committed and didactic.

Didacticism is thus a major doctrine that has exerted a very powerful influence over creative ideal all over the world. Apart from ancient times, we can't limit the scope of didacticism to that Literature which had the sole aim of instruction. "The meaning of the term didactic poetry has undergone some change," says T.S.Eliot. "Didactic may mean 'conveying information' or it may mean 'giving moral instruction' or it may mean something which comprehends both."⁶⁰

The incorporation of attractions of Imaginative Literature can be sanctioned, if it serves the aim. When instruction is in an easy and delightful way the didactic endeavour rises to the level of poetry. Whether a particular work is purely instructive or mingles with aesthetic achievement, the poet assumes the role of a teacher or philosopher. "In

selecting to express life in its continuous starving for a richer fulfilment, every artist becomes a moralist,” says W.R.Goodman.⁶¹ So the writer must be well versed in what he teaches. He must have a very clear perspective of the moral or ethical standards that are to be set before the world. But creativity and imagination also are very crucial. When we study the contributions of a didactic poet, the concentration must however be on the ideals and moral or ethical principles expounded by the poet, but of course with an eye to the aesthetic experience the work renders. For Horace had rightly observed: “the man who has managed to blend profit with delight wins everyone’s approbations, for he gives his reader pleasure at the same time as he instructs them.”⁶²

Taking all these into consideration, the investigator makes an attempt in the following chapter to examine critically how far William Wordsworth and Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer are didactical poets and what are the similarities and differences that can be observed in their works.

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The Joy of Elevated Thoughts

Pradeep Kumar K. “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer:
A comparative study with special reference to didacticism” Thesis. Department
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Chapter 2

The Joy of Elevated Thoughts

The powerful stream of time, which generally washes away the dissoluble fabrics of fame of many writers at the same time, consolidates the reputation of some greater writers. Wordsworth has been a cultural icon for the English-reading public for the last two centuries. Through the endless process of making and unmaking of what is essentially 'Wordsworthian', he has been unveiled as the true representative and a significant figure in English Poetry than a reclusive poet of nature. This is because of the manifold aspects of the poet as a patriot, a moralist, a religious teacher, a philosopher, a mystic and also a true romantic poet ever 'haunted and startled and waylaid by the slightest beauties of life.'

The importance of Wordsworth's philosophy and its implications in his poetic creed cannot be over estimated. 'Wordsworth is still necessary to us'¹ has been the general mood prevailed among the critics and the reading public all these years. According to Kenneth R. Johnston, a Wordsworthian critic:

It had been Wordsworth's truth along with Keats's beauty that had carried most of the cultural respectability Romantic Literature reclaimed during the first decades of high

modernism. Thus the revival of Romanticism's fortune in our times has been, first and foremost a revivification of Wordsworth and ways of reading him.²

One of these ways is to approach the poet and his poems, rejecting his political and philosophical stand points. T.S.Eliot criticizes some modern tendencies in reading Wordsworth:

It has become commonplace to observe that Wordsworth's true greatness as a poet is independent of his opinions, of his theory of diction or of his nature-philosophy, and that it is found in his poems in which he has no ulterior motive whatever ...If we dismiss Wordsworth's interests and beliefs, just how much, I wonder, remains? To retain them, or to keep them in mind instead of deliberately extruding them in preparation for enjoying his poetry, is that not necessary to appreciate how great a poet Wordsworth really is? ³

The poetry of William Wordsworth has stood the test of time all these hundred and fifty years since his death in 1850. He is considered as one of the greatest poets of World Literature. But during his lifetime he did not enjoy the due fame or at least he felt so. Even in the modern times no other poet has been so idolized and attacked at the same time. This is

one aspect of the paradox that has always been the hallmark of his poetic life. A true evaluation of the poet is yet to be attempted as F.R.Leavis observes:

...those who really read him today—who read him as they read contemporary Literature will agree that, in spite of the number of distinguished critics who have written on him, satisfactory statement is still something to be attempted. And to attempt it with any measure of success would be to revalue Wordsworth, to achieve a clearer insight and a fresh realization.⁴

Only true and great works of art can give us superior truth and higher reality. Wordsworth's monumental poetical legacy rests on the philosophical disposition of his poetry. His moral approach is the most important thing manifested in his poetry. This brief chapter proceeds with the intention of bringing out the moral and ethical stand points of the great poet. So a discussion on his art and philosophy is of paramount importance.

Wordsworth's poetry in general, has been interpreted as his autobiography. The theoretical discussions of the post-structuralist studies on language and subjectivity in literary works focus on the historical and material circumstances of individual writers as they attempt to define

themselves and their times through their works. Poetry of all great romantic poets are generally said to be autobiographical. But the adjective is quite distinctive in its meaning as it is used to denote a unique strategy of the romantic writers for self representation. Obviously for the same reason, the traditional notion of autobiography cannot account for their autobiographical works.

Scholars are of the opinion that all the poems of Wordsworth from “An Evening Walk” to The Prelude are essentially autobiographical. They record the history of the development of his poetic sensibility and consciousness. The life of no other artist has perhaps been so intermingled with his works. The impression that his spiritual development is what is manifest in his poetry strengthened since his strategies of self-representation included an address to his readership.

It has been said of Wordsworth that he fell in love with his childhood. He wanted to capture and define his childhood visions and experiences. These visions were clear and deep and recurred in his later life also. He attached great importance to these visions because, for him, they were the source of his poetic inspirations. This also helped his poetry to earn the ‘autobiographical’ label.

Only a few poets have told us more of their early lives. The Prelude gives a lot of information about the development of his poetic creed. He

had a forsaken and orphaned childhood spent in poverty. He was solitary, proud, self-critical and melancholic. Despite these set backs—poverty, lack of familial affection and security—he wanted to be a great somebody in life:

... his search for an identity had been accompanied by the conviction that he would somehow make sense of his life through the act of writing. There is no shortage of evidence from his letters that he cultivated the habit of living his life according to the literary precedents, first as an enthusiast for both the sublime and beautiful ... and later as a disciple of the cult of sensibility.⁵

He led a solitary life in school and college. The pangs of poesy were beginning to afflict him even at that tender stage. In a letter to his friend William Matthews, he expresses his apprehensions about the defects of his writings and at the same time hopes that “an ardent wish to promote the welfare of mankind will preserve me from sinking under them.”⁶ He preserved this concern for the poor and the afflicted throughout his life, although his political stand point later changed from Republicanism to high Toryism.

Gradually, the adolescent enthusiasm of the poet began to make way for a serious commitment to poetry. And along with that, he began to

search for a readership of his own. Interesting changes were taking place in the literary scenario of the eighteenth century, when Wordsworth himself, was undergoing such a thorough transformation. An increase in the number of periodicals and other publications, emergence of a middle class reading public and growth of working class readers and writers were some of these.

In his journey to be the monarch of all he surveyed, many influences plied on him. It was William Taylor, the headmaster of Hawkshead Grammar School who introduced Wordsworth to contemporary poetry like that of James Beattie who wrote of nature and her benevolence. George Crabbe's verse tales about the sufferings of the poor and the wretched influenced him. The moral seriousness and reflectiveness of William Cowper also attracted Wordsworth. Cowper's love for liberty, order and domestic virtues also had its sway over him. Robert Burns imbued Wordsworth with his republicanism, radical opinions, rebellion against religious orthodoxy and sympathies with the common and erring humans. Wordsworth and Coleridge were, for some time, in close touch with the London Radical Intellectuals who stood for the great mass.

Wordsworth grew up in an age of science and reason, reigned by Sir Isaac Newton and others. He assimilated many of the ideals and ideas

of the century. In his description of how Nature formed his mental character, the influence of John Locke who defined the chief operation of human mind as reception of sensory impressions passively, is very clear. Wordsworth is also indebted to Jean Jacques Rousseau for his advanced views on education, on the healing power of nature and the superiority of child to man.

William Godwin, who put forward the idea of the perfectibility of man, also exercised an initial influence on the poet. Later he parted with most of Godwinian principles. He could not understand, for example, why Godwin rejected the noblest emotions like filial piety and gratitude. David Hartley's Association of Ideas attracted both Wordsworth and Coleridge. Wordsworth readily adapted this principle to explain how the memories of early childhood help man in later life. He believed that the childhood memories are to be treasured. The association of sense impression with moral ideas forms the basis on which The Prelude is constructed. According to Hartley, two impressions received simultaneously would be linked to each other and a stimulus that recalls one would recall the other also. Wordsworth was guided by this principle in the composition of "Tintern Abbey Lines" and many other poems.

But there is far more substance in his poetry than the influence of all these philosophers put together. He puts forward a new system of

philosophy envisaging Nature as a living universe in terms of organic and creative life. But a detailed discussion on his philosophical inclinations as such is beyond the scope of this study.

Wordsworth became completely disillusioned with Cambridge and hated examinations and competitions of all sorts. So he followed a unique pattern of study and read a lot. His first tour to France in 1790 resulted in "Descriptive Sketches." Wordsworth was in France during the dawn of the new order and had sympathy with the revolutionaries as he had reflected later: "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive/ But to be young was very heaven!-" (4-5) ⁷

During the period from 1790 to 1793 he was in great distress. The glory and excitement of the French Revolution did not last for him. He began to see the horrors of the revolution for himself. More over he felt guilty and sad about his passionate love affair with Marie Anne Vallon, which came to an abrupt halt. This tragic episode of his life recounted in "Vandracour and Julia", clouded his thoughts and life for many years to come. It was at this time he identified poetry as his strong suit. "The Descriptive Sketches", "An Evening Walk" and the sonnet, "Written in Very Early Youth" belong to this period. After the French Revolution, he experienced a shattering sense of despair and purposelessness; a sense of inward isolation from those ideals which were once dear to him.

This was a period of many currents and cross currents of feelings and emotions and thoughts in the poet's mind. Yet there are evidences to assume that the creative urge was provided by the inward tension of the writer. In the eleventh book of The Prelude, Wordsworth tells the readers how, when his hopes of the real world were shattered completely, he took refuge in the realm of abstract thought. The depths of pessimism and dreariness that overpowered the poet can be discerned from The Prelude, and also from his dramatic work, "The Borderers", where in he declares: "The world is poisoned at the heart."⁸ The zealous reformer was knocked out of his perfectionist illusions and he lost his faith in the immediate social reforms as well. This was a period of gloom for him. The "Ruined Cottage" and "Guilt and Sorrow" bear testimony for this.

In 1795 Wordsworth settled in Racedown with the help of a legacy from a friend. There he spent his days in the company of Dorothy and Coleridge. This companionship was most productive and influential. It was the period of his spiritual and mental recovery. In 1797, they moved to Alfoxden, which was nearer to Coleridge's residence. Their mutual influence and intimate relationship are part of history. Wordsworth got off to a flying start with the publication of the Lyrical Ballads though it attracted severe criticism at the same time. It was not at all surprising as the poems in the collection were strikingly and devastatingly new and

unconventional. Many critics discerned the genius of the poet and the originality of the poems at that time too.

Robert Southey declared the Lyrical Ballads a failure, not because of the diction but because of the uninteresting subject matter. Critics like Francis Jeffrey severely criticized the poet for the selection of characters like the idiot boy. Jeffrey was not the only one to ridicule the choice of dull and ordinary subject matter. But to the poet, the idiot and all other characters like the destitute woman and the discharged soldier were a divine revelation about human nature. Out of the bare, unpretentious and unpromising material of common life, Wordsworth was able to distill the pure and sane feelings of humanity:

The fascination that the simple, modest, commonplace things of life and nature had for Wordsworth is thus not a mere matter of sensibility. It had its root deep down in his sense of the utter strangeness of them all. He had found them out and their beauty and their healing power after having been a stranger to them for several dreary years.⁹

His conception of human nature can be traced “to a Miltonic conception of the nobility of man and to an understanding of charity that is ultimately rooted in The New Testament.”¹⁰ Certainly he had some clear designs in writing these poems. He made no secret of his intention.

He boldly declared in a letter to Lady Beaumont: "There is scarcely one of my poems which do not aim to direct the attention to some moral sentiment, or to some general principle, or law of thought, or of our intellectual constitution."¹¹ But the treatment of the subject matter in these poems certainly enchanted the reading public. A greater number of critics also recognized and lauded the gift of Wordsworth in giving 'charm of novelty to things of everyday' as Coleridge has observed. In the ordinary sights and sounds around him, he uncovered hidden treasures of beauty and wonder.

In this epoch making work, the two poets neatly mapped out their respective provinces. While Coleridge effected "a willing suspension of disbelief", Wordsworth was to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind's attention from lethargy of custom and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before the readers. In short, as the popular saying goes, while Coleridge introduced the supernatural as natural, Wordsworth depicted Nature as having supernatural powers. It consisted of four poems by Coleridge and twenty by Wordsworth, quite characteristic of their creative output.

Wordsworth's poetic life is, by general consent divided into three phases. The first phase extends up to 1793. This period of adolescent poetic fervour is marked by the sensual pleasures he derived from

frequenting the hills and vales. Even though the poems of this period are subjective, they show a propensity towards the values and principles he developed in later life.

The second stage, by rough calculation, is from 1793 to 1798. This was the most disturbed period in his life. The misery he saw around him wounded his heart. His ideals, failure of his plans, his disillusionment about the revolutionary ideals, especially the French Revolution and his separation with Anne and his daughter are some of the experiences that left indelible marks on his poetry. It was in this initial stage that a love of Nature first made its appearance in his poetical sensibility. This was much different from his later attitude to Nature, both in kind and level. It was a period of the senses. The poet was thrilled and enchanted by the sounds and scenes. His animal pleasures lost their charm and a passion for what is picturesque was developed:

I cannot paint

What then I was. The sounding cataract

Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,

Their colours and their forms, were then to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love. (75-80)¹²

The dark period of both his personal life and themes follows immediately.

The third phase is from 1798 to 1815. But we know that the poet lived up to 1850 and continued to write good poetry to the very end. This division of time is prompted by the supposition that he had not written anything creative after 1815. As this contention is dealt with in detail elsewhere in this study there is no need of further deliberation on this point. It is the period of great poems like The Prelude, “Immortality Ode,” “Tintern Abbey,” “Michael” and “Ode to Duty.” By this time the poet had overcome challenges of subjectivity completely. The Wordsworth seen here is with a sound philosophy and theory of poetic composition. Something like a life or beingness of Nature touched him. He discerned the mysterious, all pervading spirit of Nature:

And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling place is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man: (94-99)¹³

The poet has begun to see into Nature. Nature has become a precious teacher and guide for him. This stage is generally perceived as that of

Pantheism because the poet refers to the time as: “Thence did I drink the visionary power; / And deem not profitless those fleeting moods/Of shadowy exultation.”(311-3)¹⁴ According to him the presence of this spirit in man and Nature enables man to have a better communion with Nature. Man is made wiser and purer:

... But with high objects, with enduring things-

With life and Nature-purifying thus

The elements of feeling and of thoughts

And sanctifying by such discipline,

Both pain and fear, until we recognize

A grandeur in the beatings of the heart. (409-14)¹⁵

His conception of Nature advanced and developed as he grew up. The various stages through which his love of Nature was developed have been described in The Prelude and “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey.”

The decade 1797-1807 was of ‘plain living and high thinking’ for Wordsworth. All his great poems belong to this period. By this time he had settled in Lake District. He started writing “The Recluse”, a long philosophical poem, on the insistence of Coleridge. It was never completed. He wrote The Prelude and The Excursion as parts of this major work. Even though there are differences of opinion among critics

about the span of this creative period, everyone agrees that Wordsworth's poetry was in full bloom in those years. His youthful vigour, revolutionary outlook, passionate attack on the reactionary institutions like aristocracy and the church, courage and sense of independence made his poetry passionate and intimate. His poems of the period are acclaimed to be of great beauty and depth.

Wordsworth has composed 523 sonnets, which are categorized thematically. The main groups are the liberty group (68 sonnets), Independence and Order (14), The River Duddon (34), Ecclesiastical Sonnets (132), Memoirs of Tours (113), and Miscellaneous Sonnets (122). Of these, the sonnets on Duddon depict his spiritual development. The 'river' is a symbol of the course of his poetic career. His patriotism and passion for liberty have found voice in the Liberty group. The Ecclesiastical sonnets trace the history of the Church of England. In these sonnets, more often than not Wordsworth appears as a dull historian and chronicler. Sonnets written during the tours from 1820-1837 contain his memories of various places and experiences.

A study of his sonnets convinces us that his poetic power never deserted him as the popular contention is. It might have slackened considerably. His poetic energy is at its peak in "The World Is Too Much with Us", "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey", "To

Milton” etc. Harmony, vigour and skill are the main epithets of his sonnets. Language is pure and effortless as the thought is. His sonnets are the vehicles of his ideas and ideals. His sociopolitical standpoints, beliefs and philosophy have found the best expression in his sonnets. Some critics are of the opinion that the sonnet form best suits his solitary and meditative temper. He reinstalled the Italian sonnet in English with Petrarchan rhyme scheme. But he was most careless about the structure of sonnets and often deviated from its strict rules and restrictions like limited number of rhymes. Often he broke the two tercetes into three couplets. He believed that sonnet has a divine vitality of its own. He wrote sonnets naturally and with perfect ease.

Life was not at all calm and comfortable for Wordsworth. Financial problems gave him constant worries. More over, the death of his brother John, the sinking of Coleridge and the political developments such as the rise of Napoleon fell on him heavily. Gradually he was resigned to the oppressing world. “Ode to Duty” and “Elegiac Stanzas” of 1805 bear testimony to a sad and slow change. The revolutionary withdrew and the reactionary set in. The rest of his life’s works are the poor and saddening efforts of a poet who had lost his heights. From the White Doe (1815) to “Yarrow Unvisited” (1835) all his later volumes are remarkable for their quality but lack the fire of imagination of the earlier works.

The discussion so far, traces the development of the poetic life of Wordsworth. Now what is left is to examine his poetry in detail to lay bare those aspects, which made him a great teacher of the humanity.

Wordsworth described himself as ‘man talking to men.’ He believed that poems alter persons. He set himself out for a crusade against corruption in Literature and life. In the “Preface” to the Lyrical Ballads (second edition), he declares that, his poetry that is prompted and regulated by meditation and that excite feelings has a function or purpose. If this is not so, he says, he does not wish to ascribe the title of a poet, because according to him:

But a great poet ought to do more than this; he ought, to a certain degree, to rectify men’s feelings, to give them new compositions of feelings, to render their feelings more sane, pure and permanent; in short, more consonant to Nature, that is, to eternal Nature, and the great moving spirit of things. He ought to travel before men occasionally as well as at their sides.¹⁶

Both Wordsworth and Coleridge believed that poetry must have a bearing upon the real or desirable sympathies of mankind. Wordsworth never forsook his duty of guiding and consoling the destitute and the afflicted. The most important point in his doctrine is to ‘arouse the

sensual, vacant and vain' to magnanimity and 'to bind together by passion, and knowledge the vast empire of human society as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time.'¹⁷ At the same time he enjoyed the beauty and joy of poetic composition.

Often he has been designated as a philosopher or a philosophical thinker with an aim. Coleridge remarked that Wordsworth's poetry is his philosophy and that he is a feeling philosopher. But he was a consummate artist who put the interests of poetry before the interests of philosophy. So we may safely call him a philosophical poet rather than a philosopher or a philosophical thinker because, Wordsworth's philosophy, as Herbert Read has put it, was based on intuitions rather than on ratiocinations. F.R. Leavis says that the relation between systematic philosopher and poet in Wordsworth was very much external: "Even if Wordsworth had a philosophy, it is as a poet that he matters, and if we remember that even where he offers 'thought' the strength of what he gives is the poet's".¹⁸ This opinion might have welled up from the belief that a natural and inevitable contradiction exists between the poetic faculty and the faculty of philosophy.

But what kind of philosophy did Wordsworth put forward through his poetry? Many critics share the opinion that there is no vision in his poetry other than the vision of Nature. His poetry has its origin in the

consciousness of Nature and its pervading spirit. Yet J.S.Mill made a rather curious observation that Wordsworth is not a natural poet in the sense that Shelley is one. He says, "In Wordsworth, the poetry is almost always trying to enunciate a proposition, rather than express a feeling."¹⁹ Here all we can and need to say in defense of the poet are that his is a different kind of nature poetry, transcending such sensibilities that generate feelings like happiness or solace in the 'lap' of nature. To him Nature was something more than an entity, a place for solace or still an abstract idea. He says he was able to feel :

A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore I am still
A lover of meadows and the woods,
And mountains; (100-05)²⁰

The Prelude and many other poems trace the growth of his mind. This mind is one with his poetical consciousness of Nature. It is so because, from his early childhood, Wordsworth received in his mind, impressions from Nature, which made him a poet. But he is equally a poet of Man and Humanity. He wrote:

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,

Of moral evil and of good,

Than all these sages can . . . (21-4) ²¹

If Coleridge called Wordsworth a philosophic poet, Shelley designated him as the 'Poet of Nature.' Many poets, before and after Wordsworth had sung about the beauties of Nature, perhaps more sweetly than him. But no one saw Nature in its totality, as he did. No other poet was able to visualise Nature as a being of its own or as an organic universe. Again, no poet had tried to see into the nature of things to know how Nature is fitted into the Grand Design that is God. Thus Wordsworth stands unsurpassed as the greatest poet of Nature. Now this contention is to be further pursued to examine the didactic creed of the poet.

His imagination also was fed on the beauty of Nature. But he saw Nature as a being of its own, 'having a purpose of its own.' ²² He discerned the spirit of Nature and became its high priest:

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe!

Thou soul that art the eternity of thought,

That givest to forms and images a breath

And everlasting motion, not in vain. (401-4) ²³

He felt that this spirit of the universe was the eternity of thought. It gave form to everything. It purified his soul and cleansed all feelings and

thoughts. It disciplined every emotion of the poet. With a realization of the wisdom of the universe, anyone who loves nature can enjoy the same experience and feel one with its grandeur. Spirit and wisdom of Nature will purify men.

Walter Pater comments thus on the nature poetry of Wordsworth:

...that strange mystical sense of a life in natural things and of man's life as a part of nature, drawing strength and colour and character from local influences, from the hills and streams and from natural sights and sounds ... that is the virtue, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry." ²⁴

To illustrate the point further, the case of the old man in "Michael" is before the readers. The life or the existence of the old man is conceived and strengthened by the mountains around him:

Those fields, those hills—what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is no life itself. (74-77) ²⁵

Poetry, according to Wordsworth incorporates the passions of men with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. "Its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not standing upon

external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion ... Poetry is the image of man and nature.”²⁶

Wordsworth saw Nature as a poet magisterially transforming the landscape as if with an imaginative power. The ‘imaginative impressions’ from nature is the source of his poetry. Rene Wellek opines thus in this regard:

Imagination is here conceived as intellectual intuition, as a higher faculty of knowing, as reason ... which demands the association of love, the love of mankind and of God. On certain occasions, Wordsworth adopts the language of idealism and calls imagination ‘the faculty by which the poet conceives and produces ... individual forms in which are embodied universal ideas or abstractions.’²⁷

Thus his concept of nature is closely and intimately associated with his poetic creed.

He depicted Man as part of Nature. Man and Nature are not mutually exclusive entities. Both are parts in a fuller context, which can be called again Nature or Universe. This was Godhead to the poet. Whether Wordsworth believed in God as prescribed by any religion or was an atheist is not certain to this date. But certainly he had a staunch faith in a Supreme Soul or Power that controls the entire universe, which

is one with Nature: 'Here might I pause and bend in reverence / To Nature....' (224-5) ²⁸ In fact his poetry itself is a bonafide record of his search for that power. As it has been made clear already, he contemplates a spirit of the universe or a Supreme Mind that is present in everything in the universe: "O'er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,/ dwells in the affections and the soul of man / a Godhead ... (1-3) ²⁹ He believes that it is not different from Nature. It seems that he envisages this spirit as God Himself:

The being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves. (165-8) ³⁰

It is generally agreed that the three core themes in Wordsworth's poetry are Nature, Man and Spirit. Helen Darbishire is of the opinion that his themes or subject matter included everything connected to life:

Wordsworth's vision of life took a wide sweep: it embraced the mind of man, the inner life of Nature where the mind of man meets it, the sphere of the elementary passions revealed in humble life, the world of high action in the national and international arena, and the personal world of passing things and lasting truths which his mind lived in from day to day. ³¹

Thus it becomes clear that Wordsworth was not an exclusive nature poet as he was not a poet of humanity alone. He was giving out valuable lessons through his poems that deal with Nature. He modestly declares that:

The moving accident is not my trade;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts. (97-100) ³²

He sought to develop the sensibilities of the readers to make them purer, saner and better. What he prescribes as the function of the river can very well be applied to the poet himself: "to heal and to restore/ To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute!" ³³

To him Nature is at the same time a refuge, a philosopher and guide, a soothing presence and a mysterious spirit. He claims that for all that he possessed, he is indebted to the bounty of Nature. It is the source of his words and thoughts. He says he is:

Well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart and soul
Of all my moral being. (107-11) ³⁴

He considered it as his duty to rectify man's feelings and to deliver the pure feelings in affinity with Nature. He negated the concept of man as the superior being in Nature, as propounded in the age of Reason. His moral principles consisted in knowledge of Man, Nature and Humanity. Man is a part of Nature who is to be benefited by it. He believed that there is a harmony to be achieved between the mind of man and Nature:

Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,

Our minds and hearts to bless-

Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,

Truth breathed by cheerfulness. (16-20)³⁵

His human beings fit well into Nature. Man becomes one with the powers in Nature, as seen in "To Toussaint l'Ouverture"

Thou hast left behind

Powers that will work for thee; air earth, and skies;

There's not a breathing of the common wind

That will forget thee; thou hast great allies; (9-12)³⁶

Wordsworth sought the elixir to end human miseries through his poetry. His poetry, by being linked to Nature, acquires a new sensibility to sing of the human miseries forlorn and forgotten.

To her fair works did Nature link

The human soul that through me ran;
 And much it grieved my heart to think
 What man has made to man. (5-8)³⁷,

The human soul may be the cosmic soul of the entire humanity. The poetic creed of our poet assumes definite didactic characteristics here.

He was the high priest of Nature and won moral consolation for the afflicted humanity as a true didactic poet would endeavour:

Of Truth, Grandeur, Beauty, and Hope
 And melancholy, Fear subdued by Faith;
 Of blessed consolations in distress;
 Of moral strength, and intellectual power;
 Of joy in widest commonality spread; (767-71)³⁸

He sang of the great and permanent things that moved through human mind, consoling and liberating it. According to some critics, he put forward the idea of the motherhood of Nature and the brotherhood of men in Nature.

Under 'nature's holy plan,' by observing the mystical ways in which the mind is 'fitted' to the external world as well as the world to the mind, one could discover a sufficient justification of God's ways to men. 'Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us.' This was Emerson's

cogent summary of the point Wordsworth made in a thousand ways throughout the course of his poetical career.³⁹

He weaved a complex philosophy around his concepts of man and Nature. According to him Nature is a great sage and guide to the humanity.

Myself will to my darling be
 Both law and impulse and with me
 The girl in rock and plain
 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
 Shall feel an overseeing power
 To kindle or restrain. (7-12)⁴⁰

As a poet he was able to feel the soothing spirit of Nature: “Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!”⁴¹ The poet laments that men have become soulless and heartless slaves of wealth and that we are out of tune with Nature. But as a poet, he wanted to “Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn”⁴²

“The Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey” declares his philosophic thoughts. He owed his allegiance to Nature because he gained from them,

. . . ; that blessed mood
 In which the burthen of the mystery

In which the beauty and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened: - that serene and blessed mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us on, -
 Until the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul :
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things. (37-49)⁴³

It is a complete and composite manifesto of the poet regarding his vision of Nature.

In this poem Wordsworth speaks of a voice or a presence that will speak of 'moral strength' and 'intellectual power' and of blessed consolations in distress. In "Michael" we perceive his philosophy of Nature that leads to a love of mankind. In 1802, he composed some beautiful poems in amazing rapidity. "Rainbow", "Ode on Intimations of Immortality", "Beggar Women", "To a Butterfly", "Daffodils" etc. belong to this period. His love of Nature in its simple forms is expressed

through beautiful descriptions of simple objects of Nature such as rainbow and flowers.

He composed his “Ode on Intimations of Immortality” in a questioning mood. He wondered: “Whither is fled the visionary gleam? / Where is it now, the glory and the dream?” (56-7)⁴⁴ Perhaps no other lines had been discussed as seriously as these with the possible exemption of the famous expression of Hamlet, “To be or not to be.” The general contention is that it is a pitiable wail over the departure of his creative powers. Apart from the lamentation on the loss of poetic power, the deep undertones of the philosophies of Plato and Pythagoras are echoed. The fleeting nature of life and the decay of humanity are pictured here in dignified style and tone. Only Nature can communicate the vision of immortality which man has lost. Wordsworth was a great moralist. His sense of supremacy of the moral laws and his faith in conduct and duty made him a great teacher. In the early poems he propounded closeness to Nature as a remedy for the miseries of humanity. In the later poems like “Michael”, “Laodamia”, “To Milton” “Ode to Duty” etc. his exhortations take on the appearance of neoclassical ideals. In “Ode to Duty”, one of his most didactic renderings, Wordsworth addresses duty:

... O Duty! If that name thou love

Who art a light to guide, a rod

To check the erring, and reprove;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe;
 From vain temptations dost set free ;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity! (2-8)⁴⁵

The tragedy of Michael is caused by the destruction of 'natural piety' without which life must lose much of its purpose and value.

In "Laodamia" the readers can find Wordsworth with a stoic view of human passions. He exhorts his heroin to exercise restaraint:

And Thou though strong in love, art all too weak
 In reason ,in self-government too slow;

For this the passion to excess was driven—

That self might be annulled: (140-8)⁴⁶

John Stuart Mill, the British philosopher and economist records that Wordsworth's poetry served as a sort of medicine for him. He was able to discover the perennial sources of happiness and to remove the greater evils of life. Mill vouchsafes that it was "not mere outward beauty but states of feeling and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty" worked wonders for him.⁴⁷

The poetry of 'human passions, human characters and human incidents' ("Advertisement to LB") is identified as the poetry of human suffering by Wordsworth. He writes in The Recluse:

On man, on nature, and on human life,
 Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
 Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
 Accompanied by feelings of delight
 Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed.⁴⁸

The influence of Rousseau and Robert Burns and the memory of vagrants so large in numbering his locality made Wordsworth portray wretched human beings like old and destitute people, beggars, abandoned women and simple and innocent people living in communion with Nature. But the poet, who is intensely interested in humanity, is not content with that. He wishes to teach man that his salvation lies in Nature. As it has been discussed already, Wordsworth firmly believes that man can attain humaneness only through the communion with nature. In The Prelude he gives his own experience:

From Nature and her overflowing soul
 I had received so much, that all my thoughts
 Were steeped in feeling; I was only then
 Contented when with bliss ineffable

I felt the sentiment of Being spread

O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still; (397-402) ⁴⁹

Man becomes man when he is purified by Nature. His moral sense and sensibility are refined by Nature. Wordsworth wanted man's sensibility to be made live and fresh. Then only he will be able to view Nature and God and himself as part of a grand Design. This is the essence of what he wants to teach humanity by virtue of his being a poet. He has a clear-cut concept of a real or ideal human being: "And that unless above himself he can/Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!" (330-1)⁵⁰ Such an ideal human being lives in the lap of Nature, away from the corruptions of modern world. He shall possess the basic qualities needed for a virtuous life. His guiding force shall be his own conscience—a conscience perfected by Nature:

But above all, the victory is most sure

For him, who seeking faith by virtue, strive

To yield entire submission to the law

Of conscience-conscience reversed and obeyed

As God's most intimate presence in the soul'

And his most perfect image in the world.(222-7) ⁵¹

The Prelude originally titled "The Growth of a Poet's Mind" is an autobiographical poem, in the sense that it traces the development of the

poet's sensibilities, feelings and emotions. The significant events and impressions of his life that formed his philosophy are described in detail. The fulness of experience makes this work a modern epic. The dedication of the verse itself makes its didactic purpose clear: "this verse is dedicated to Nature's self/ And all things that teach us as Nature teaches" (230-1)⁵² In the course of the fourteen books, it examines the central concepts of his poetry-namely Man, Nature and Spirit-and their interrelationships. We come across several testimonials about the healing influence of Nature:

O Nature! Then hast fed
 My lofty speculations; and in thee,
 For these uneasy hearts of ours, I find
 A never-failing principle of joy
 Purest passion (447-51) ⁵³

The Prelude is full of his experiences, which helped him develop insights about life, his vocation and Nature. It also gives information to the readers about the phases of his mental and spiritual development as well as personal life. These are imparted by the poet in the hope of educating the readers. In short, Wordsworth tries to teach humans through a detailed account of his own special, as the case may be, experiences.

For instance, when recalling the memory of a boy, he gives some advice regarding the upbringing of children, by wishing that,

Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,

Be these the daily strengtheners of their minds;

May books and Nature be their daily joy!

And knowledge rightly honoured with that name—

Knowledge not purchased by the loss of power! (421-5)⁵⁴

In book VIII, he tries to give a retrospect of his vocation and confesses that till that time Man was not there in his scheme. But now he comes to see and love man as a part of Nature. He declares that he “... shall continue evermore to make/Of the whole human race one brotherhood.” (86-7) ⁵⁵ He searches for the underlying causes of man’s problems and wonders why a few alone can be called ‘men’ in the true sense of the word? Bettering their lot is a self-assigned task for the poet. Promptly, he turns to Nature for a solution:

From Nature doth emotion come, and moods

Of calmness equally are Nature’s gifts:

This is her glory; these two attributes

Are sister horns that constitutes her strength (1-4) ⁵⁶

Here the poet sees Nature as a well of inspiration that helps him develop emotions and feelings, making him a poet of humanity. He feels that he

gained much from Nature's bounty. He preaches this for the entire humanity, too:

If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,
 And intellectual strength so rare a boon—
 I prized such walks still more, for there I found
 Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure peace
 And steadiness, and healing and repose
 To every angry passion. (177-82) ⁵⁷

During this close intercourse with Nature, he comes across pure, untainted country folk who taught him many things. They present a picture entirely different from those centres of civilizations where "Love cannot be; nor does it thrive with ease/ Among the close and overcrowded haunts/ Of cities, where the human heart is sick," (202-4). ⁵⁸ So we get acquainted with truth and goodness only in the lap of Nature. For this and other kinds of precious insights, he thanks God, for it is God who attunes our heart for his service. Nature is seen as God here by the poet. Nature had invested him with a special faculty to lead the humanity:

That Poets, even as Prophets, each with each
 Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
 Have each his own peculiar faculty,

Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to perceive

Objects unseen before, . . . (301-5)⁵⁹

It is now explicit for him that, as a poet thus specially endowed, he can boldly guide mankind as Nature directs. He is also reminding other poets about their duty.

He believes that power that Nature wields over us can be attained by man also, but only by minds of higher order and that too through a communion with Nature. Wordsworth tells us that love is the real essence of life: "By love subsists/ All lasting grandeur, by pervading love; /That gone, we are as dust" (168-70).⁶⁰ The lesson of love can be inculcated in the mind of man by Nature.

The closing lines of this grand poem serves as a manifesto of the poets creed.

....what we have loved,

Others will love, and we will teach them how;

Instruct them how the mind of man becomes

A thousand times more beautiful than the earth

On which he dwells, above the frame of things

(Which 'mid all revolution in the hopes

And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)

In beauty exalted, as it is itself

the humble Of quality and fabric more divine. (446-54) ⁶¹

Wordsworth is critical about the so-called sophisticated life and possesses a firm and deep-rooted distrust of life in cities away from Nature. Nor has he any esteem for the principles and ideologies that turn away from the sufferings of humanity. He scorns the social order and the economy: "Economists will tell you that the state/Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling thought/And false as monstrous! . . . (283-5).⁶² His egalitarian views often prompted the critics to assume that he was exaggerating the didactic elements in his poetry.

But it must not be forgotten that his earlier poems bear a revolutionary zeal. All the poems written between 1793 and 1798 deal with the darker sides of the human life. His eyes were fixed on the suffering of man and wanted to relieve him from his hardships. Those poems pose the need for equality among human beings. He took it upon himself to bring succor to them. S.K.Sarker, an Indian scholar in Wordsworth studies, believes with many others that Wordsworth who condemned the economic divide between the rich and the poor and stood for economic as well as social equality can be considered as a forerunner of Karl Marx. He also thinks of the possibility of Marx being influenced by Wordsworth when the former came to England in 1849. Anyway it is evident from his poems that Wordsworth was a critic of the treatment of

the humbler sections of the society by the industrial class. Here, Wordsworth anticipates the conflict which arose in the latter half of 19th century, between industrialization and the agrarian society. In The Excursion, the Wanderer laments the state of destitute children of the peasants:

This boy the fields produce:

.....

The sceptre of his sway; his country's name,
Her equal rights, her churches and her schools –
What have they done for him? And, let me ask,
For tens of thousands uninformed as he?
In brief, what liberty of mind is here?⁶³

In “To Milton” he asks people to follow the puritanical ideals of nobility, simplicity and humbleness. Though not a prolix moralist, he is not ashamed to acclaim his moral principles. He believes that poetry alone can bring morality and wisdom for the benefit of humanity. His philosophy places poetry above philosophy. His aim is to be nobly poetical and deeply didactic. He proves that moral exhortations and aesthetic expressions would go together. The Preface and Appendix added in the 1802 edition of Lyrical Ballads has a set of propositions about the nature and criteria of poetry which were widely adopted by the

contemporary romanticists as well as even those who had no sympathy for them.

According to Wordsworth, poet is a man speaking to men, different from them not in kind but in degrees of sensibility and power of expression. He thought himself as the representative of human nature, because according to him the essential passions of the humanity are the same everywhere. A mad mother or an idiot boy thus became an appropriate subject of poetry for him as Achilles or Lear was to others. His characters like Michael, the Leech-gatherer, Solitary Reaper and Danish Boy have their existence in this elemental domain of humanity. The more he is in touch with the simple and primal feelings and passions the better his art is. Whatever may be the subject matter or form of poetry, its duty is to promote benign tendencies like love and human relationship. This is done by the purgation of finer feelings, not by a mere appeal to the intellect, how ever lofty and subtle that may be. His was a special blend of aesthetic and didactic approaches.

An oft-neglected feature of his poetry is the power of observation of the poet. In the opinion of Arthur Compton- Rickett, Wordsworth observed Nature to find out a particular attitude or principle that suited his need. Being a moralist he might have missed a great deal too. The Cumberland beggar or the leech-gatherer is a pathetic figure dignified by

the background of the touch and beauty of Nature. Even while propagating morals, he let his poetry run its course.

Whatever be the form he adopted - narrative, lyrical, elegiac or sonnet - his concentric method gives the poems a depth and intensity. This has helped the poet to emphasize his principles. The simple force and direct approach of the poems are also proved effective. His observations provide him with spiritual situations. The mood is inevitably meditative. Freshness and sweetness added by his genius and the skillful exploitation of the sense of sound render his poems a remarkable charm:

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard

In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,

Breaking the silence of the seas

Among the farthest Hebrides (13-6).⁶⁴

He cannot be called a dry moralist because he has disclosed for humanity a poetic vision of beauty and morality combined.

It is sad and disheartening to discuss the rather bleak years of his advanced life. With the publication of The Excursion critics like Matthew Arnold, Francis Jeffrey, Hazlitt, John Stuart Mill, and De Quincey pointed out that Wordsworth was forgetting that poetry was not so much a thing said as the way of saying it. Matthew Arnold wrote :

The Excursion and The Prelude, his poems of greatest bulk are by no means Wordsworth's best works. [. . .] Work altogether inferior, work quite uninspired, flat and dull, is produced by him with evident unconsciousness of its defects, and he presents it to us with the same faith and seriousness as his best work⁶⁵.

According to Francis Jeffrey, "It (The Excursion) is longer, weaker, and tamer, than any of Wordsworth's other production".⁶⁶ Hazlitt is more severe: "He (Wordsworth) only sympathizes with those simple forms of feeling which mingle at once with his own identity . . . An intense intellectual egotism swallows up everything."⁶⁷ With the later poems such as "Laodamia", there came the general verdict that not only his style became cold and stiff, but his sentiments became detached and aloof. The contention was that the poet in Wordsworth had died forty years before the death of the man. This does not seem to be true or wholesome. The poetic power never deserted him though there was a definite decline. His later poems and sonnets bear testimony to this fact. Anyway after 1815, he was not able to produce any work of merit. Herbert Read says in this connection, "The dying embers emit an occasional spark, but nothing that in any degree adds to the total impression of his genius."⁶⁸

Among the many reasons proposed for the apparent decline of his creativity, a notable one is that the poet failed when the man changed. As mentioned earlier his ideals and outlook underwent a total change towards the later years. Propagation of the values he believed was a part of his art. His poetic vision was a combination of beauty and morality. When his broad impulses were constricted and his inspiration was infected at source, his poetry degenerated.

In his later life, Nature ceased to be his constant companion and guide. The heart had gone out of his nature poetry. With that coincided the decline of his creativity. If he dwelt any more in the doctrine of Nature, it was because of the powerful influence he had experienced in his youth. His faith in Nature became mechanical and superfluous. The degeneration of his poetry coincided with this sad change.

He rejected and renounced whatever ideals and youthful passions he had once. He lauded whatever he had despised in youth. He turned to be a Tory who argued for order and discipline and wanted to curb the freedom. He became a staunch supporter of the Church. He abandoned his hitherto favourite subjects like the rustics and innocent country dwellers. He became insensitive, inflexible and unfeeling. He began to distrust the passions and untainted emotions of human heart. His advice is

“to control/Rebellious passion; for the Gods approve /The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul.”⁶⁹

T.S.Eliot's words will make this point clearer: “. . . it is Wordsworth's social interest that inspires his novelty of form in verse, and backs up his explicit remarks upon poetic diction.”⁷⁰ Thus it is clear that his poetic power deserted him when he deserted his ideals and principles, which inspired his poetry. But at the same time his readers should bear in mind that he always felt deep sympathy for the common man even while opposing reforms.

The widespread belief that the more didactic Wordsworth grew, the less creative became his poetry, does not hold much water. Even in “Ode to Duty” he performs the duty of a teacher but didactic elements are not so tiresome. The readers cannot ignore the beauty of the following lines:

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security (17-20)⁷¹

It is a fact that his poetry turned to deliberate preaching from subtler teaching. The later deterioration of his poetic power might have resulted in gross and dull moralizing.

There are many other factors pointed out by different scholars and critics. One is the tragic death of the poet's brother Captain John Wordsworth. He was drowned with his ship on 5 February 1805. Those who support this theory point out that this devastating experience was a turning point in his life. The Wordsworth after this shock was never the same as before. In the "Elegiac Stanzas" written next year, he presents the rather pathetic statement that: "I have submitted to a new control: / A power is gone, which nothing can restore."⁷² Herbert Read contributes this decline as the deadly work of remorse about his desertion of Annette. The other reasons pointed out are his disillusionment with the French Revolution and other ideals, troubles suffered mentally and too much toil.

It can safely be concluded that William Wordsworth is a great poet of Nature, humanity, childhood and rustic life. Whatever he found around him fit to sing, he sang it for his fellow beings. In spite of all the inconsistencies of his nature, he never deviated from what he believed his duty was: to be the teacher and guide to humanity. This he did most marvelously. Wordsworth wrote in a letter to Lady Beaumont, in 1807 about the aim and destiny of his poems:

to console the afflicted; to add sunshine to day-light, by
making the happy happier; to teach the young and the
gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and,

therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous;
 this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform,
 long after we (that is, all that is mortal of us) are mouldered
 in our graves.⁷³

Now after all these years we know that his hopes were fulfilled and that his poems continue to attract readers. And he shall be read and esteemed by the generations to come also. For in the words of Coleridge, "... he will be admitted as the first and greatest philosophical poet, the only man who has effected a complete and constant synthesis of thought and feeling and combined them with poetical forms, with the music of pleasurable passion." ⁷⁴

Certainly he is the greatest artist of English Literature, as Thomas De Quincey has put it: "... there is little competition to be apprehended by Wordsworth from anything that has appeared since the death of Shakespeare." ⁷⁵ He has been a teacher and guide to millions at a time of strife and confusion. He stood as a beacon of moral and ethical principles in the 18th century firmament. Shelley had sung of him thus:

Thou hast like a rock-built refuge stood
 Above the blind and battling multitude;
 In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
 Songs consecrated to truth and liberty (9-12)⁷⁶

This glowing tribute from another great poet of the age, who also was an avid social reformer, alone, would suffice to estimate the importance and contribution of William Wordsworth as a didactic poet. He was gratified by what he had done to the humanity. He was able to perform for the destitute and the downtrodden, what he wanted to do for them. He made use of his creativity and poetic faculty for the entire humanity. Marmaduke, the protagonist in “The Borderers” reminds of his creator, when he says:

I have loved

To be the friend and father of the oppressed.

A comforter of sorrow; - (634-5)⁷⁷

NOTES

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Hymns of Morality

Pradeep Kumar K. “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer:
A comparative study with special reference to didacticism” Thesis. Department
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Chapter 3

Hymns of Morality

Critical opinion on Ulloor has in general been centred round the notion that his poetry is highly unreadable. The general trend is either to ignore him or to denounce his poetry ingloriously. It is very plain that studies in this category often fail to provide a comprehensive vision of the essence of his poetry. Most of the critics did not care for a fresh approach. This chapter is also an attempt in this direction even though nothing more than an elementary probing is claimed.

It is of common agreement that Renaissance dawned on the Malayalam Literature in the last lap of the 19th century. It happened as a result of the work of several forces together. One of the prime reasons was the Romantic Movement. Malayalam poets acquired familiarity and great affinity with the British Romantic poets. This led to a great flow of poems modelled on great poets like William Wordsworth, John Keats, Shelley and others. An emphasis on imagination, zeal for change, and a craze for new trends were visible. It was in this era novel, short story and lyrical poetry were introduced to the language for the first time. Critics and literary historians differ about the exact date of this: some putting it

as the last decades of 19th century and some as the first two decades of the next century.

The general observation is that Romanticism and twentieth century dawned together in Malayalam poetry. The first traceable trends of Romanticism were visible in the works like malajavila:sam (1895) of A.R.Rajaraja Varma, asannamaranacinta:satakam (1895) of K.C.Kesavapillai and oru vila:pam (1908) of V.C.Balakrishna Panicker. A close reading of the poems of V.C.Balakrishna Panicker reveals the influence of Gray and Wordsworth. Most of the critics and readers will agree to the remark of Dr. K.M.George:

Actually the golden period of modern Malayalam poetry comprised the second and third decades of the present century. Three poets were responsible for this great revival. They are Kumaran Asan (1873-1924), Vallathol Narayana Menon (1879-1958), and Ulloor Parameswara Iyer (1877-1949). They are usually referred to as the ‘Great Trio’ of modern poetry.¹

The long period of 150 years between Kunchan Nambiar and these modern poets is rather barren except a few sparks and glimmerings here and there. The period just before the dawn of Romanticism is designated as the “Age of Keralavarma” in recognition of the leadership of

Keralavarma Valia Koilthampuran. In the very beginning of the said era, literary endeavours were mainly in Sanskrit. The grammar of that language held its sway. Works were produced in strict accordance with the rules prescribed by great masters of Sanskrit Literature. P.K.Parameswaran Nair, an eminent Malayalam critic writes of that time:

The single great influence on poetry at that time was Sanskrit Literature: the ‘champus’ were cast in Sanskritic mould and the ‘Attakkathas’ were weighted with its vocabulary. It was even customary in the nineteenth century to appraise the status of a poet by the number of ‘kathakali’ works produced by him . . . Sanskrit learning was held a *sine qua non* for all poetic acitivity.²

Sanskrit poems and plays were translated into Malayalam in large numbers. The pure Malayalam genre like pa:ttu, kilippa:ttu and tullal were marginalized. maha:ka:vja:s (epic poems) and poems of Sanskrit metre found large readership. But the poetic sensibility of the age was slowly undergoing a change of far reaching impact. The Venmani poets- the father and the son-fired the first shot against the neoclassical over-rule when they employed a chaste and simple idiom for poetry. The age had actually been divided as Keralavarma School and Venmani School which were in vogue in the southern and northern Kerala respectively. Venmani

School followed the simple style of Cherussery while Keralavarma School opted for the splendour and pomp of the campu language. The dissimilar aspects of these sects in taste, style, and traditional and personal aspects were clearly visible.

A.R.Rajaraja Varma, poet and grammarian, had strong Romantic inclinations and under his able leadership, poets and scholars like K.C.Kesava Pillai, M.Raja Raja Varma, V.C.Balakrishnapanikker and others were drawn to Romantic imagination. A.R. Rajaraja Varma argued that poets should concentrate on emotions and thoughts, not on formal values. In the famous rhyme controversy, he took the helm against the neo-classicists led by his uncle, Keralavarma Valia Koilthampuran. Thus it is evident that the first rumblings of the Romantic Movement were felt in Malayalam Literature as early as the dawn of twentieth century. Even then the major poets of the day were busy composing campu and epic poems. Dr.K.M.George in his SahityaVijnanavum Vijnana Sahityavum (1983), describes the setting in of Romantic tendencies and also the several factors which led to it.

According to him, in the first phase between 1830 and 1880 educational institutions and printing presses were spread almost all over Kerala. The works of Hermann Gundert, Rev. Bailey and missionaries of European churches gave a new energy to the language. Dr. George calls

the second phase as the age of giants in Malayalam Literature, some of them being Vallathol Narayana Menon, Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran, Kumaran Asan, A.R.Rajaraja Varma, Kodungallur Kunhikkuttan Thampuran, C.V.Raman Pillai, O.Chandu Menon, Appan Thampuran and P.K.Narayana Pillai. Genres like novel, short story, drama, essay, biography and criticism made their manifestation in the language in this period. It was also a period of great change. Dr. George calls it as a period of cross fertilisation since the writers were eagerly exploring the treasures of English and Sanskrit Literature.³ The third phase is a period of consolidation and natural development of the tendencies mentioned heretofore.

Ulloor lived and wrote during a period when deep and vast changes were taking place in the literary tastes and views of the Malayalam reading public. As we have already seen, Essay, Biography, Criticism etc. appeared and gradually bloomed into fuller development. New experiments were conducted in poetry. The sources in English and Sanskrit had been exploited. A number of periodicals were started. 'Vidyavilasini' [1881], 'Bhashaposhini' [1893], 'Malayala Manorama' [1890], 'Rasikaranjini' [1889] etc.were some of them. Thus the atmosphere was afresh and most encouraging.

Dr.K.Raghavan Pillai comments on that era and its major concerns and tendencies:

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With this process also went a revaluation of the moral and spiritual ideas that gave sustenance to the social order. Vast sections of the underprivileged in Hindu society were no longer enamoured of these values. In Literature itself artistic values which sanctioned only a second place to traditional morality in preference to ideas of beauty were becoming popular. A powerful romantic movement careered its course in defiance of the classical pattern of poetry and mesmerised people by its aura of individuality. It was in this context of strong, multiple innovations that Ulloor continued to voice his moral concern for man and for the human situation, although in the form and structure of his poetry he indeed bowed to changing pattern as in a change over to the style of lyric from that of the longer poem (maha:ka:vjam). His insistence on values of life consequently made him an authentic moral voice in the 20th century Malayalam poetry.⁴

The Golden Age of Romantic Poetry coincides with the Golden Age of Modern Poetry. It was in the age of the grand trinity of

Malayalam—Asan, Ulloor and Vallathol—that Romanticism held its full sway in Malayalam. These poets were mainly responsible for the poetical resurgence in Malayalam Literature. Even though they started writing poems pretty early in their lives and continued writing till their death, their best poems were written in the second and third decades of twentieth century when Romanticist tendencies were in high tide. They were all classicists in the beginning of their poetic career and drank deeply from the fountain of Classicism. But they were quick to read what was written on the wall of time and consequently graduated into Romanticism.

These three poets had much in common. Besides, they tried to emulate and imitate each other, creatively and not blindly. At the same time they had their own unique ways and modes. Asan was a socio-political reformer who used his poems to challenge the social order of the day. Vallathol was a born poet who celebrated the worldly life, even though the socialist and realistic schools of Literature attracted him in later years. Ulloor was totally different from the other two in many respects. He never approved sensuous feelings in poetry nor did he challenge the social customs of the day openly.

He was a great scholar and an ambitious poet who worked hard to earn a place of merit in Malayalam poetry. Ulloor, being the close follower and disciple of Keralavarma Valia Koilthampuran, was the last

of the three to switch over to the romantic alignment. Ulloor was a staunch classicist both by taste and training. He found more pleasure in flowery language and idioms than in subtle and fine sensibilities and dreams peculiar to Romanticism. This does not mean that he was dumb to the demands of the new generations of the reading public. He tried his best to get in tune with the thought patterns and tendencies of the changing times. Only that he staggered a little when moved away from the well-known grounds. Dr. K.Ayyappa Panikker observes:

Ulloor was perhaps the most classical and the least romantic of the three poets. One could say either that the romantic in him was stifled by the authoritarian classicist or that the classicist in him was trying to pass for a romantic to suit the changing tastes of the time.⁵

Even though Ulloor had a sound scholarship both in English and Sanskrit, he was influenced by the literary traditions of the latter. The tutelage of Valia Koilthampuran led him to accept and adopt Classicism. “His poetry remembered with nostalgia the classical centuries, both in the Malayalam as well as the Sanskrit tradition, and his background, temperament, career and capacity all collaborated in inspiring him to attempt a classical revival.”⁶ Thus he wrote an epic poem to establish his name and fame as a great poet. In the same period we see him indulging

in traditional poetic games and gimmicks such as group versification and extempore versification. Thus when Asan and Vallathol discovered a new sensibility and began to write poems about the simple beauties and day-to-day problems of the common people in a simpler style and diction, Ulloor was still grappling with scholarly and courtly subjects, decorative style and ‘inane phraseology.’

Poet and critic Prof. O.N.V.Kurup says that all the three of the modern trio switched over to Dravida metres and style in the latter half of their career.⁷ Ulloor was able to break the manacles of traditional poetry only after the death of his master and mentor, Valia Koilthampuran, in 1915. The popularity of the poems of Asan and Vallathol was an eye-opener for him. He was quick to understand the needs of the hour. He began to compose in Dravida metres and dropped the classical insistences like dviti:jakṣarapra:sam (rhyming of the second character of every foot/line) and passion for figures of speech, conceits etc. Dr. M. Leelavathy says that the influence of Romanticism and also of the Venmani poets made Ulloor write lyrics and odes in pure and simple Malayalam. But even then his poetry sustained some marked differences with that of the other two. His approach is altogether different from Romanticism, as we now understand the term. The tone, atmosphere and language of his poems, along with other things are suitable for lyrics of

thought and ideas. Thus, his poetry strikes a different note of Romanticism for the reader. Dr K.Ramachandran Nair writes: “. . . the term romantic, in spite of its having 11,369 definitions as counted by F.L.Lucas, fails to accommodate Ulloor and to account for the several paradoxes one comes across in his poetry”.⁸ It is clear that his poetry defies all generalizations of the kind.

Many critics are of the opinion that the passionate lyrics of Ulloor, dealing with contemporary social and political issues lack warmth and intensity, giving the impression that he wrote those poems only not to be left behind of others. They also say that these poems lack an immediacy of experience. A survey of the life of the poet will tell the readers why that criticism does not hold much water.

Ulloor was born in an orthodox Tamil Brahmin family in Changanassery on 6 June 1877. His father wanted to make him a Sanskrit scholar. By the time of his father's death, Ulloor had acquired mastery in Sanskrit. His father was an ordinary school teacher. They had no landed property either. So the untimely death of his father put young Ulloor and the family into innumerable miseries and hardships. For Ulloor, it was the beginning of toil that went on for the rest of his life.

In the early years itself he mastered the languages English, Tamil and Sanskrit. He passed his B.A. in 1897 and worked as a teacher for four

years. At the age of 26, he graduated in Law and in the next year took his M.A. in Tamil and Malayalam. He completed his academic career successfully, despite the heavy odds. He had to face many hardships in the very beginning of his life. As the eldest son, the responsibility to support the family fell on his shoulders. When he was 25, his wife died, leaving two children in his care. In later years, many more tragedies were to happen in his life, including the deaths of his second wife, three children and younger brother. The poet endured all these with stoic courage.

Ulloor had a very busy and eventful official life. He joined the Government Secretariat as a head clerk at the age of 27. He became a secretary in the State Government at the age of 42 and a few years later, he became the Divan Peshkar. During his tenure as a civil servant and even after retirement, he worked in different capacities. These include the Curator of Malayalam Publications, Director of the State Archives and the Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the University of Travancore. He retired as the Commissioner of Land Revenue, a prestigious post, next to that of the Chief Secretary to government. He was a dedicated and diligent official throughout his official life. In spite of these heavy responsibilities, his poetic life had been amazingly fruitful. Ulloor began writing poems at the age of 13. He dedicated one of his

poems written in that period to Keralavarma Valia Koilthampuran. Few of those poems are extant now. What is left now as his early poems are a few ones composed in about 1893.

The first major work of this great poet is the campu, sujato:dva:ham, depicting the love story of Prithwiraj Chauhan, the King of Indraprastha and Sujatha, daughter of Jayachandran, King of Kanuj. Before that what he had in his credit were a few quartets, some minor verses about the puranic stories and “van̄ci:ṣagi:ti”, a long poem praising the King of Travancore. The campu won wide acclaim of the contemporary literary circle. The selection of the theme from Indian History and the upholding of the traditional values that are Indian (arsabha:rata) in essence were the first indications of the priorities and principles of the poet.

Ulloor became a noted figure in Malayalam Literature when he took charge as the faithful lieutenant of Keralavarma Valia Koilthampuran in the fierce debate on second letter rhyme scheme. He opposed the arguments of renowned literary figures like, A.R.Rajaraja Varma and K.C.Kesava Pillai exhibiting great vigour and erudition.

He wrote a great poem of epic standards, uma:ke:ralam in 1913 to establish the supremacy of second-letter-rhyme scheme. It is considered as a monumental work employing the second letter rhyme scheme.

Another aim behind the great poem was to establish name and fame as a poet as it was the wont of the time. The maha:ka:vja Movement started in 1902 with the publication of ra:macandravila:sam by Azhakath Padmanabhakurup, failed to establish itself as a powerful trend due to the romantic awakening. Even the famous citrajo:gam by Vallathol was described as a futile effort. But uma:ke:ra:lam is considered as the best of its kind even now. Keralavarma Valia Koil Thampuran had praised thus the grand venture of his beloved disciple:

In the vividness of its imagery, in the grandeur of its conception, and in the exquisiteness of its workmanship, this great poem . . . may not be inaptly compared to that admirable masterpiece in Sanskrit Literature, the Naishadheeya Charita (History of Naisadha) of Sriharsha, and will be seen not to suffer in the least by the comparison.⁹

Ulloor didn't choose his theme from the myths or legends as per the common practice. His theme is taken from the annals of the state of Travancore.

maṇḍalamanJari, a short poem (khaṇḍaka:vjam) also belongs to this period. It is a poetic tribute to Sri Moolam Thirunal, the then king of

Travancore on the occasion of his 60th birthday. He also wrote some prose intended for children during this period.

A cardinal change took place in his poetic sensibility not long after the publication of the epic poem. He detected the changes occurred in the tastes, aptitudes and sensibilities of the readers. Gradually but decisively, his poetry shed some of the heavy traditional ornaments and coat of arms and began to travel freely in the realms of Romantic Imagination. This shift was a deliberate attempt on his part to keep up with the other two poets. His crossing over to Romantic sensibility is evident in the two collections of poems came out in that period: kirana:vali and ta:raha:ram.

But as it was discussed earlier in this chapter, he was fundamentally a neo-classicist. In some basic aspects, he remained as a true traditional poet who would not leave the trodden path at any cost. His adherence to and dependence on the traditional Literature of India may be one example. This scholarship might have contributed to the didactic inclination of the poet.

In 1926, he published the third collection of lyrics, named tarayini. In the same year he wrote karnabhu:sanam and pingala, two of his short poems (khandaka:vja). karnabhu:sanam is the story of the generosity of Karna, the son of Kunti. His munificence even at the face of death is praised in the poem. Karna does not yield to the requests and coaxing of

his father, not to give away his armour and ear rings. Karna's steadfastness and principles make him a hero and a martyr. Sacrifice is a prime value, which always attracted Ulloor. He readily makes use of the situation for moralizing. piṅgaḷa tells us about the transformation of Piṅgaḷa, a prostitute. The driving force is detachment from worldly affairs, which, in turn emanate from piety. In this aspect she is different from Vasavadatta of Asan's karuṇa or Mary of Vallathol's magdalana marijam. Piṅgaḷa's disappointment, sense of defeat, remorse, self-pity and new hopes are portrayed vividly.

citraṣa:la, citro:dajam, caitraprabha:vam, śaraṇo:paha:ram and bhaktidi:pika are his other short poetical works which belong to the genre khandaka:vjam. citraṣa:la is the poet's reply to the criticism about the deplorable plight of Indian women. He doesn't make any attempt to counter the attack with reasoning, but refers to the rich Purana and itiha:sa (epics/legends) to prove that the case is otherwise. citro:dajam and caitraprabha:vam are tributes to Sri Chithra Tirunal Balaramavarma, the then ruler of Travancore. bhaktidi:pika is the story of Sanandana the disciple of Sankaracharya and Chathan, an untouchable. God appears to Chathan, due to his unflinching devotion, where as Sanandana could not make God appear before him despite his penances and rites.

Even after the retirement, Ulloor remained busy in literary endeavours. Perhaps these years can be called the most productive in his career. maṇimanJusa, amrutadha:ra, hridajakaumudi , kalpaśa:khī and ratnama:la were the products of this period. “pre:masamgi:tam,” one of his famous poems propounding universal love is included in maṇimanJusha . Musical quality, philosophical outlook, and metrical perfection make this poem a masterpiece. Other famous poems such as “hi:ra,” “vica:radha:ra” and “bharati:japraṛthana” are included in kirana:vali. “viśvaviJajam” a short poem is found among the lyrical poems in taraha:ram.

aruno:dajam is a collection of 13 poems, parts of which were written by other poets. In those days it was a custom among poets to choose a famous or interesting theme as the plot and then engage in a joint venture of writing a poem. They divided the parts to be written by them. The co-authors of Ulloor were Pandalam Keralavarma, Kuttippurathu Kesavan Nair, Nalappattu Narayana Menon and others.

di:pa:vali contains about 500 ślo:ka:s (couplets) on ethics and morals. Most of them are translations from Sanskrit. Twenty couplets are compiled under 25 titles. Some of them are about human body, instruction, humility etc. The last collection of poems, taptahridajam was published in 1948. It includes “a: cutalakkalam,” which laments the

assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, along with other poems written during the last seven years of his life.

Ulloor was an accomplished essayist, a literary historian and a critic too. Asan and Vallathol also did their part as critics. Dr. K. M. George says that Ulloor was more full-fledged as a critic since he showed more impartiality, maturity, and tolerance than the other two¹⁰. His essays on Literature in viJña:nadi:pika introduced many literary principles and practices for the first time in Malayalam. His great work Kerala Sahithya Charithram [A History of Kerala Literature] in seven volumes, alone will convince anybody of his erudition and ability for hard work. It is the greatest of its kind, tracing the history of both Malayalam and Sanskrit Literature in Kerala. It is so comprehensive that it contains a scholarly chapter on Changampuzha Krishna Pillai whose untimely death preceded its publication by a few months.

viJña:nadi:pika, a collection of 66 essays in four volumes, is a treasure house of precious knowledge and information. It is the result of painful research and toil. He wrote about the culture, history and language of Kerala along with some diversified subjects. gadjakalika (1931) and smarana ma:dhuri (published posthumously-1951) are the other two collections of his essays. There are many uncollected essays to his credit. His prose works are marked with beauty, brevity, discipline,

order and depth. In addition to these he also wrote many stories and rhymes for children. Those who allege abstrusity will be surprised to see the simplicity of language in his ba:ladi:pika and sada:ca:radi:pika.

His other works include “amba,” a play, several essays, studies, theses, speeches and lectures, treatises and reports of both official and un-official nature. He translated maju:rasande:ṣam written by Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran into English as The Peacock Messenger. Among the large volume of the works of our poet, special mention should be made about the lyrics and sonnets he had written in English. “Tat Tvam Asi”, “The Peace at Versailles” and “Why Not” are a few remarkable pieces. These works along with numerous speeches and essays written in English are the best examples for his enticing style and masterly presentation.

Ulloor has been honoured with many awards and titles by various institutions and authorities such as Kavitalaka by Sri Moolam Thirunal Rama Varma Maharaja, the then ruler of Travancore. Rao Saheb (1930), Maha:kavi (1937) and Sahitjabhu:ṣan (1939) are a few of other titles. Prof.N.K.Seshan has rightly appraised the busy creative life of Ulloor in the following words:

All these achievements were made by him in a period of six decades which were marked by no less arduous tasks he was

called upon to perform in an all-too-busy career as a responsible government servant who rose to the highest echelon of the official hierarchy of the erstwhile state of Travancore.¹¹

Sheer hard work, selfless dedication and punctuality enabled him to accomplish these laurels. Apart from the tragedies in personal life, a brief remark may be made about the unpleasant and cruel experiences Ulloor had to face both in official and literary lives. A section of people viewed him as a loyalist and a high caste Brahmin who rose in office by means of these favourable factors. Another section, including his own people eyed him with suspicion as they took him to be a radical, with dangerously liberal ideas. It is a paradox, which affected the poet very much. His sincerity, honesty and straightforwardness earned many enemies for him. He felt that nobody was there to support him. This sorrow was never abated till his death on 15 June 1949.

Now, having undergone a brief tour through Ulloor's life and works, what remains to be done in this study is to closely examine his poems and find out how he approached the vocation of poetry. In his presidential address at the Edappally Conference of Sahithya Parishad, Ulloor made it very clear that there was nothing impossible to attain if we were persistent and hard working. He continued thus:

Poets should explore the beauty and power of nature; should read various books carefully. Above all they should be diligent and also sympathetic to all living beings. Then only they deserve the title of a poet.¹²

‘Diligent’ and ‘sympathetic’ seem to be the two words that hold the key to the poetic creed of Ulloor. He was really a hard worker who found time for literary endeavour despite his busy and eventful official life. It is also widely accepted that Ulloor is a committed didactic poet. The present study is concerned about the nature, depth, various areas and impact of his didacticism. Such a study has to enquire about how far the various factors like ancient Indian Literature, Indian Poetics, The Sacred Literature, the instruction he received, his personal experiences pertaining to family and social circles, his intellect etc. could have influenced his poetic life and output.

The misfortunes and bitter experiences in his life might have compelled the poet to find solace in spirituality. He faced life stoically and developed his own philosophy. He firmly believed that it was his duty to impart this insight and knowledge to the world. To him, poetry was the most suitable vehicle for this purpose.

There is a wide spread belief that while Asan and Vallathol were extremely radical and progressive, Ulloor was highly conservative and

indifferent to the contemporary social scenario. This was not true, even though he had the limitations of his office. E.M. S. Namboothirippad made this clear when he wrote that Ulloor also had a major role in propagating the message of social and political changes in Kerala. He said that with the rise of this second trio of poets Malayalam Literature saw the rise of a bourgeois class struggling for modern values.¹³ Dr.M.Leelavathy says that the poetry of Ulloor is an attempt to adorn 'today' with the beauteous garments of poetry woven with the splendorous strands of the past.¹⁴ Ulloor firmly believed that poetry was not mere self-expression, but a promulgation of what was good and noble. He was an avowed moralist. He left aside no opportunity to enlighten the public. He insisted that his poetic creed must be beneficial to the world as well as to self. So such allegations can best be considered as baseless and biased. His thoughts and deeds were well ahead of his time.

Ulloor practised what he preached. He wrote poems to educate men and to make them civilized and good. From his first poetic utterance to the last one, he tried his best for this. Of course this led to some compromises in aesthetic aspects. Because of this didactic fervour, he gave enough opportunity for his critics and others to point out and exult in his flaws, which they did well. One feels that even the later exodus to

Romanticism was not completely able to change the outlook of Ulloor in this regard.

There are various gifts or sidhi:s a poet usually possesses. These vary from poet to poet. Similarly concepts of an ideal life, principles and ideology differ from poet to poet. This determines the unique style of the poet. What were the ideals and principles Ulloor propounded through his works? What were the values dear to him? What were the major influences plied on him?

In his first major work, namely suJa:to:dva:ham, Ulloor had adopted a historic theme as quite befitting to propound the values and principles dear to him. Even though a campu is descriptive in nature, Ulloor had found out plenty of occasions for instruction. The poet depicts the courage and valour of Prithwiraj, the vile nature of Jayachandran, the devotion and steadfastness of Sujatha and the cruelty and baseness of Mohammed Gory vividly and at the same time intentionally. He finds it as a golden opportunity to expound the values cherished in a:rsa bha:rata.

uma:ke:ra:lam, its theme being war and love, has all the proper ingredients of an epic poem of grand style and size. The theme, partly historical and partly imaginative, has been developed skilfully, incorporating several incidents and characters. The dramatic elements, constant conflicts and eventful development of the story make the reading

highly pleasurable. Adithyavarma, the weak ruler of Travancore, his daughter Kalyani, and minister Thampan were deceived by the feudal lords *ettuvi:ttil pillaimar*. Their intrigues make the king send Thampan on exile. Later they poison the king. Umayamma, sister of Adithyavarma assumes the throne. Ramanamathom, an *ettuvi:ttil pillai*, murders five of her sons. At the same time Mogul invaders begin to raid the border of Travancore. Umayamma seeks the help of Prince Keralavarma of Kottayam, who routs the enemies with the help of Thampan. *ettuvi:ttil pillaimar* are also defeated and punished. Then Thampan marries Kalyani. Thus the poem ends in a happy note.

In composing this epic-scale poem, Ulloor has observed all the rules prescribed for an epic poem. Pious invocations of Gods, detailed descriptions of the landscape of Kerala and patriotic songs praising the motherland are well woven to the mainstructure. An address to *tu:lika* [pen] was an innovation effected by Ulloor. The verbal beauty gives a dynamic mobility to the work. Ulloor's lyrical genius and intellectual knowledge are blended harmoniously. Rhyming on the second letter adds to the total effect, even though it results in verbosity at times. The use of figurative speeches, the sequence of events and the eloquence are quite befitting to a great epic.

Even Prof. Joseph Mundassery, a severe critic of Ulloor's poetry praises uma:ke:ralam as the best of all modern epics written in the language.¹⁵ He praises Ulloor for the realistic depiction of Kerala life. There are serious faults and shortcomings that one cannot help feeling while reading the poem. But this can be better attributed to the rigid structure and conventions prescribed for an epic. Long and tedious descriptions of towns, palaces, oceans, hills and heroines and improper lines and phrases totally uncalled for are a few of the necessary ingredients of an epic. Another feature is the use of words or phrases in more than one meaning. Making of ambiguous sentences by laborious construction and remote allusions were some of the common practices. All these can be said to have inherited from the Sanskrit poems and campus. Even great masters like Asvaghosha, Magha and Harsha had to abide to these crippling practices. Even the works of Kalidasa, exalted as great examples of epic poetry, were not entirely free from these. Bringing all these into effect in an epic poem was often considered as a feather in the cap of the poet. Then only he deserved the title of maha:kavi (a great poet).

Ulloor also had to travel by this traditional route. It is to the credit of our poet that he did his best to incorporate the theme to the rigid framework of an epic. Many critics had pointed out this to those who

tried to find fault with Ulloor's epic poem, uma:ke:ra₁lam. The detractors often evaluated this great work with the criteria of a short poem or lyric. Of course there are some really dull stanzas in the work. But to point out only a few lines from more than two thousand beautiful lines and censure the poem altogether is totally unbecoming of the high duty of a critic. This is what happened in the case of uma:ke:ra₁lam. A group of critics selected a few lines and tried to substantiate that the great epic was dull throughout.

Even though the maha:ka:vja Movement is a hallmark of classicism, uma:ke:ra₁lam contains certain strains of the Romantic imagination like emotional vibrancy, harmonious blending of different aspects and earnestness in treatment.

There are abundant examples of the poet's patriotic fervour, sense of moral standards and justice. uma:ke:ra₁lam is actually a harmonious blending of fact and fiction. Each canto of this epic poem is vibrant with heart-rending scenes. The first and eighteenth cantos describe and praise Kerala.

Patriotism and perseverance in love are the two values Ulloor projects in this poem. He has taken care to make sure that the evil ones are punished properly and the virtuous are rewarded. The great exertion behind this grand work was recognized duly acknowledged by the

readers. Imaginative faculty, skilful craftsmanship, inclusion of proper ingredients of an epic and the dramatic elements made the poem a grand work. But the zeal to enlighten and preach had caused detractions.

Ulloor wrote his first short poem in the 51st year of his literary career. That was karnabhu:ṣaṇam. It deals with the dramatic moments in the life of one of the illustrious personages of the Mahabharata—Karna. What Ulloor attempts here is a dangerous feat of picturing the eventful life of that hero within the scope of a short poem. And he has done it perfectly and we see the great depths of personal conflicts and ethical dilemmas as the universe reflected in a dewdrop. The poem is a survey of the life of Karna, the generous and much misunderstood prince. This poem gives much scope for the poet to sermonize on his favourite value—generosity. Thus the poem becomes an apt vehicle for the poet for instruction.

Prof P.K. Parameswaran Nair calls karnabhu:ṣaṇam as the “crowning glory of Ulloor’s poetry.” He is so sure of his philosophy and poetry, in that poem more than in any other poem. It is the story of Karna, the incarnation of charity. Indra, the father of Arjuna comes to him in the guise of an old Brahmin to beg for his armour and earrings. Indra does this to make him vulnerable to the weapons of Arjuna. Adithya, the father of Karna asks him not to part with those protective devices. But Karna

sticks to his principles and tells his father that he is not afraid to die for the values and principles he esteems. There is a serious discussion on principles, values and human relations in the poem. Ulloor soars high into the firmament of poetic sublimity in this poem. The poem showcases his favourite ideals: charity and sacrifice.

piṅḡala, another short poem of Ulloor tells us the story of the repentance and transformation of a courtesan, namely Piṅḡala. She becomes a chaste and pious woman through penance and devotion. In this poem also Ulloor exemplifies and extols the virtues of life. bhaktidi:pika hails the unflinching and unselfish devotion to God. That is why Chathan, the untouchable, is able to see God where as Sanandana is not. These three short narrative poems of Ulloor give us valuable insights and value based knowledge.

Instruction through a literary work is not necessarily done in a direct way. It can either be implied or interwoven with the story. Ulloor's bhaktidi:pika is a powerful river which caresses the two banks of spirituality and material life with emotions of deep piety, says Dr. Sukumar Azheekkode.¹⁶ It is accomplished by means of a discussion between Lord Narasimha and Sanandana, which clears the doubts of Sanandana. Even though bhaktidi:pika is predominantly didactic,

aesthetic beauty is not at all compromised. There is many a gem of advice that can be garnered from the poem.

kṣulkrīṣānu:ṇe:kijum, nagnane putappiccum
 dukhije to:ṣipiccum,ro:gije śruṣru:siccum
 a:pattil peṭunno:ṇejaśvasippiccum,ta:ṇu
 ku:pattil kiṭappo:ṇekkai koṭuttujarttijum,
 anjar tan smitaccillil tan sukham niri:kṣiccu-
 manjar tan harṣa:srumutta:tmavittama:jippu:nṭum
 hr̥ttilum cakṣussilum va:kkilum kar̥mmattilum
 śudhama:m pre:matinte sa:nnidhjam ka:tṭikka:tṭi;
 lo:katte kuṭumbama:ji Ji:vijesso:darjana:ji;
 de:hatteppara:r̥thama:m jaJñattin sa:magrija:j;
 e:vano kalppiccente ve:lajil paṅka:lija:j
 me:viṭa:no:rppo:navanennum ña:n vaśamvadan.¹⁷

(I serve him who feeds the hungry
 Clothes the naked; makes the grieved merry;
 Nurses the sick; consoles the afflicted;
 Saves those in danger; finds his bliss
 In the smiles of others; takes happiness
 Of others as his own wealth;
 Shows the presence of true love in deeds

Words, heart and eyes; counts world as his family
 And all beings as his kin; gives himself for others
 And lives in accordance with my grand designs.)

God tells Sanandana that real devotion is nothing other than unselfish service to others. This forms the core of Ulloor's philosophy.

He has about 150 short lyrics to his credit. His short poems also are to be perused and enjoyed to understand the poet better. They deal with themes from the great epics, Puranas, myths etc. and abound in advice, storytelling, praises and rich descriptions. At the same time they handle quite contemporary issues and radiate progressive ideals and scientific perspective. They diffuse an unabated love for ancient Indian culture and veneration for the rich tradition of the country. Of these, "oru marattulli" (a raindrop), "kanja:kumarijile su:rjo:dajam" (Sunrise at Kanyakumary) and a few other poems can really be called lyrics both in quality and content. Most of these poems are didactic. They abound with rich anecdotes and morals. They convey the poet's opinions, values, and canons in divergent matters like social, political, economical, ethical, religious and moral. Poems like "kabi:rada:san," "vi:rama:ta:vu," "hi:ra" etc. are directly didactic. A few other poems including "pre:masamgi:tam" are aesthetically appealing too. Poems like

“munno:ttu,” “Atom Bomb,” “ammajum makanum,” “tatvacinta,” “matrubhu:mi,” etc., are direct exhortations to the readers.

His concepts of poetry and poetics were in the lines of ancient masters. He gave importance to the didactic feature without sacrificing the aesthetic achievement. He believed that the reader must benefit from poetry. That is to say poetry must bear a message to the reader. The scope of teaching in a poem is two folded: thematical and executional. Ulloor made use of both very effectively.

From this discussion on his poems, it can be assumed that Ulloor’s poems are didactic in nature. But details about the ideals and values which he tried to propagate and the method adopted by him for that and his quality as a didactic poet are yet to be explored.

Writing poetry was not a pastime for the poet. He was trying to depict or disseminate the ideas and ideals acquired by means of vast reading and deep thinking. He sincerely believed that poetry is accepted and appreciated only when it imparts some instruction. According to him, good Literature should be sweet as well as thought provoking. He believed that a healthy sense of ethics and morals should form an inevitable part of art. A work of art should continuously toil for the good of the humanity. He had an exalted concept about poets. Like Wordsworth, he envisaged the position of a venerable teacher for the

poet. The poet should be a devotee of God. A true poet shall be civilized, well bred and properly instructed. This concept of Ulloor is in tune with the Indian poetics. He reiterated the didactic aspect of poetry without discarding or denying its aesthetic excellence. Ulloor's style becomes more sublime and charged when he delivers moral principles or tries to impart some messages.

The first and foremost concern of Ulloor was to propagate the universal values propounded by the sages of ancient India: “nammalkku sana:taṇa dharma:carjanirddiṣṭa / nirmala nirvika:ra brahmam ta:n pra:pja stha:nam”. ¹⁸ (Our aim is to attain oneness with the supreme soul /as directed by the teachers of eternal ethical values.) His philosophy was firmly based on the principles of ancient India. He advises the West:

paurastjajum ta:n paratantrajum ta:n

daridrajum ta:n bharato:rvi : pakṣe

muttum bhavadvja:dhi śamippatinni:

muttaṣṣi taṇ mu:likajonnu po:rum¹⁹

(India is in chains and is poor

But this grandma can cure

Your disease with her panacea sure)

It was his belief that teaching the eternal Indian values will help the world to solve the problems.

He imbibed from the epic, The Mahabarata, an ardent wish to propagate or promulgate high ideals of life. During the long struggle for Indian independence, the nationalistic fervour was kindled by strong belief in the ancient wisdom and greatness of Indian culture, which is generally known by the name a:rsabha:rata culture. Gandhiji, Swami Vivekananda and Aurobindo Ghose were a few of the leaders who had staunch faith in the wisdom and greatness of ancient Indian culture. Ulloor was a foster child of that time and movement. He was an ardent devotee of that glorious past. But it may be remembered that he was not a prisoner of the past.

Then we see him listing those values ancient India deemed most:

sauṣi:ljam, saumaṇasjam, sauha:rddam, sa:ho:darjam

saubra:tami:mattullā sadguṇa prakā:ṇḍaṇḍal

anno:njavidve:ṣa:dho:lo:kattil ninnu namme-

puṇjama:m śa:ntina:kam pu:kikjum so:pa:ṇaṇḍal. ²⁰

(Gentleness, friendship, magnanimity, fraternity

These good ideals are stepping stones to get out

Of the hell of hatred to each other and to get on

To the blissful heaven of peace.)

In many other poems too, he hails these virtues. “hi:ra,” “kabi:rada:san” and “divjasa:ntvaṇam” are a few of these. He exults in the rich tradition of India again and again:

ma:munima:rum mahi:śarumennalla

ma:ṭappira:kkaḷum anjarkka:j

kṣipram śari:ram

tjajikka:ṇ maṭikka:tta

salpraJe:, bha:rata ratnagarbhe:!²¹

(Oh Bharat! Possessor of good subjects!

Even your doves are all ready

To sacrifice their lives for others

Let alone the ascetics and great kings)

He sang of the love that is beyond the narrow walls of castes or creeds. He always praised and valued perseverance and hard work. These found a place of honour in his poetry. He is found to discard his usual verbosity when dealing with this theme. He imparts great truths of life through simple and direct diction. When he has a moral message or an instance of exalted concept of justice, he takes extreme care to write it in very simple and pure diction. Perhaps the poet doesn't, at any cost want the messages or the principles he tries to drive home, to be obliterated. The effect generated is like that of a teacher giving lessons on the eternal

and permanent truths to his disciples in a language that is most palatable to them.

ke:lkkunnu na:mittali, raṣja totṭuḷḷa
 na:maṇḷal ; ke:lḷka:ttatu ranṭu m:atram
 mahikju, de:ṣam śakala:mśamennum,
 martjarkku vargam parama:ṇuvennum.²²

(We hear names like Italy, Russia

And such; what is not heard are

But two things—that the whole world is one

And all beings belong to one clan.)

No wonder his exhortations wielded a particular charm for the readers. He believed that all forms of art including Literature must be subservient to society. These should be beneficial to the people. So, for him, literary life is a service to the fellow beings.

Ulloor's style reaches its zenith in "pre:masamgi:tam." His vision, principles, dreams and philosophy are incorporated in that poem. In "pre:masamgi:tam," Ulloor proclaims nothing other than the message of The Upanishads. Love enables man to see the universe as a part of his entity. He will see himself in all beings and here his voice echoes in the universe. It is man's own duty and his destiny that with love he can convert this world into a heaven. It is his misfortune that he can turn it

into a hell too. Ulloor concludes his beautiful poem inimitably in the following lines:

parasukhame: sukhamenikjunijatam, paradukham dukham;

parama:rthattil paranum ña:unum bhava:unumo:nnalli:?

bhava:unadhi:unam paramennutalum pra:unaum; ava rantum

para:rthama:kkuka pakalum ra:vum; prabho:! namaska:ram²³

(The happiness of others is, of course, my happiness; their

sorrow, mine;

In fact, are not others, I and you but one and the same?

At your full disposal is my body as well as my life; pleased

be thou,

To make it useful to others day and night; I salute thee O!

Lord!)

The legacy of humanity is doing service to each other and living for others. And that determines the quality of our life:

namikjilujara:m, natukil tinna:m, nalkukil ne:tita:m:

namukku na:me panivatu na:kam narakavumatu po:le.

manavum mirijum na:vum karavum mannin ma:lakala:n

maha:unkamba: masrunitama:kkum manusjar de:vama:r²⁴

(Prostrate, we raise; sowing we eat; giving, we gain;

We are ourselves the architects of our heaven and hell.

Men rise to Godhead if they wipe away the world's sorrows
 By suffusing their minds, eyes, tongue and hands with great
 compassion)

Like a true mystic the poet sings in ecstasy:

namo:stute maJ*Ji*:vanada:jaka! naṭe:śa! parama:tman!
 nara:khjamaṇe: narttaka gaṇamitiñ ña:numoralpa:ṇam.
 ve:ṣamenikkentennu vidhippatu vibho:!bhavaccittam;
 viśvaprijama:j naṭanam ceivatu vidhe:janen kritiam.²⁵

(Prostrations to thee, my life-giver, O! Cosmic Dancer,O!

Supreme soul!

I am but a humble member of your company of dancers

named Mankind.

Lord! The will to assign the role for me is thine

And the duty to act it as pleasing to the world is mine)

It is our duty to help each other. Then only men will live in peace and attain spiritual enlightenment: “viḷakku kaivaśamullavanennum viśvam di:pamajam”(to him, who holds a lamp, the entire universe is lighted).²⁶ There are many instances of Ulloor's fervour for service and sacrifice being manifested through his poems. His belief is that man's life must be in service to others:

“ce:lilumatinmattu ma:lilum sattukkal tan

ve:lajonnatre nu:nam – paro:paka:ram.²⁷

(Whether in joy or distress, the virtuous

Are keen to serve others, for sure.)

Service to others is the path to immortality. Real great men are those who
light the paths of humanity by means of their words and deeds:

maṇikketa:ttoru maṇipradi:pam

maṭjante pa:takju koḷuttitunno:n

maha:n; ciraṇJi:vijavante munnil

mariccu vi:runnatu mṛutju tanne.²⁸

(One who lights an eternal lamp

In the path of humanity is great.

Before him, who is immortal,

Falls dead Death itself.)

He cites examples from nature to establish that God has envisaged
every species of this world for service to others. Service to each other is
the key for a more beautiful and harmonious world:

iruppavanum malar gandhame:kum,
 vetṭunnavanum taru cu:ṭakattum;
 hanippavanum kili pa:ṭtupa:ṭum,
 paro:paka:ra pravaṇam prapancam.²⁹

(To those who pluck too, blooms give fragrance,
 To those who cut also, the trees give shade,
 To those who kill, the birds give sweetest song,
 Of deeds of selfless love, this world is made)

Sacrifice, charity and kindness are some other traditional ideals, which Ulloor holds fast. One may become convinced of this after reading karnabhu:ṣaṇam. He hails the generosity of Indians in the following lines:

bha:rata bhu:talamauda:ria sasjattin
 va:rutta ke:da:ram paṇtupante:³⁰
 (From old, this ancient land, India is
 A flourishing garden of generosity.)

His vision is vast enough to incorporate even the seemingly insignificant.

innu na:m cappumcippumenno:tum pada:rthaṇa-
 lonninum koḷlunnatallennalli: ninakjunnu?
 vjarthama:jonnum tanne viṣvattillennuḷla
 tatvam na:m dharikka:te va:rvata:ṇatin mu:lam³¹
 (Nothing is useless in this vast universe,

It is our ignorance that makes us think
 That the things we throw into dust bins
 Are good-for-nothing and useless.)

He wanted the readers to accept what is good from the old. He was a reformer with progressive ideals. He approved of the progressive ideals in the fields of religion, politics and the society. His progressive perspective can be read out in poems like ‘bha:ma.’:

paṛajatu pukaṛttunnu; putijatu paṛikjunnu;
 paṛajatum putijatum ariṇi:ṭa:tto:r
 paṛajatu mara:maramiṭajile:tittiḷkkaṇṇi
 paṛajatu kalarppatta:l putijata:ji³²

(Some blame the new and praise the old.

They don’t even know these two.

Old is an eternal tree

What is new is the old in pure form.)

He kept his eyes always open to the changes in the society as well as new trends:

kuḷattile pa:rkeṭu ni:ttilalla
 ku:tta:ti nilkkunnatu lo:kamippo:l
 kuticcuratna:kara sakhjama:lum
 ku:lan̄kaṣakkuḷḷa pajassilallo: ³³

(The world does not take bath in the stagnant water of a tank.
It plunges into the waters of a fierce river, rushing to the
sea.)

And he wanted the society and humanity to advance in the same pace:

nilkkumi:nilppil nilkka:te

ni:ṇi munno:ttu po:jiṭa:m

piṭiccu tallumallenkil

pinnilninnu varunnavar³⁴

(Let's go forward; for, if we stop dead here,

Those who come after us will push us aside)

He has little patience with those who are not ready to read what is
writ on the wall of time.

hrudajavum kaṇṇumuṭajo:re! ke:lppin

udajam ceitupo:j navi:nama:m jugam

atiniṇaṇa:tta paṇamajokkejum

patikkaṭṭe cennu paṭukurikkullil³⁵

(Hear! Oh! Those who possess eyes and a heart,

A new age has dawned; Let the rotten useless

Things of yore fall into the garbage pit.)

Many critics including Dr. Sukumar Azheekode have pointed out
that commitment to duty is one of the dear subjects of our poet. He was a

strong advocate of Karmayoga as propounded in The Bhagavat Gita (action without anticipating any rewards). He himself was very much hard working through out his life performing his multifaceted duties systematically and sincerely. He has devoted many a lines to praise action. As a poet he has no melancholic strains to his credit like Kumaran Asan. He has no time to indulge in such digressions, as they are quite unbecoming of the high office of a poet. Nor can he agree with the art-for-the- sake-of-art-attitude of Vallathol Narayana Menon. He is so sure of his vocation. His poetry exudes happiness and confidence:

mrutjuvina:nenkilenta:ji kkolatte Jenmam;
 mrutju Jenmattina:nennille sama:dha:nam?
 puttana:mo:ro:taram vastuva:j praka:sippu:
 cattupo:jenno:rttu na:m dukhikjum samastavum.
 pa:ritam smaśa:namalla:jatinnatikju na:m
 caruva:me:to: śilpa śa:lajonnatre ka:ṇmu:,
 aṇḍoliṇe:to: śakti vajpatuntella:ttinum
 mangalam valarttuva:n manJulakkajjum ni:tti ³⁶

(Why bother if life ends up in death?

Remember death leads to another life.

Things that we count as gone and weep for

Comes back to us as new things.

This world is not a cemetery wide; instead
 What we see beneath is a beautiful edifice.
 A life giving force acts mysteriously
 To render good auspices to all).

He wanted man to make his otherwise brief and dull life beautiful and meaningful through earnest and selfless hard work. If one has something meaningful to do, it will make one's life happy and blessed. We have a great deal to do in this life. Let us not retreat from our duties to this world and the humanity. Effort, selfless and complete will make us complete human beings:

etiriṭum vighnaśataṇḍale du:re: -
 patirin maṭṭu:tippara parappiccum
 aṇi nirannoppam puro:gamikkjuvi-
 naṇajuvin śi:ghramabhi:ṣṭalakṣjattil.³⁷

(Blowing off like chaff
 The obstacles that in hundreds that face us,
 Let us march forward in a single file
 Quickly to reach the desired goal)

Through a number of poems, Ulloor entreat us to do our duty. One may wonder as one reads on his poems whether Ulloor would ever be fed up with this theme. Such is his allegiance to that principle. To him action

is a means of salvation: “kaivela ne:tittarum ka:śu ta:n maha:meru/ mei vijarppinkal cejjum s̄na:n̄am ta:n̄ ganga: s̄na:n̄am” (money earned from labour is great as Mount Meru/ Bathing in one’s own sweat is equal to bathing in the Ganges.)³⁸. Ulloor upheld the ideals of perseverance and optimism against the grim picture marked by inertia and cowardice. To live is to act and to indulge in the luxury of idleness is the very negation of life. It is also against the laws of this universe the forgiving of which is the message of action:

....ente mantram ña:n̄ Japippatunt̄u-

--djamam vi:n̄tum vi:n̄tumudjamam, ja:vaJJi:vam³⁹

(Let me chant my own motto: Effort;

Effort again, till the end of life).

Dr. K.Raghavan Pillai, a noted Malayalam critic says that this is not an instance of giving out a personal ethic. He continues:

Action without a social ethic can very well lead to ruthless self-aggrandizement. Indeed a good number of successful men lead lives of action, which offer no solution to the problems of the society. Ulloor links his call for action to sublime social purposes in the best tradition of Bhagavat Gita. Aware of the inequality, poverty and backwardness of

society, he pleads for a linking of activity to pressing social problems. He asks for unity of endeavour.⁴⁰

Ulloor exhorts his fellow-beings to engage in action and reach the goals we set for ourselves. We are not to rest till we reach the destination.

po:kuka munno:ttu ve:gam; pa:ram

vaikunnu ka:ṇmi:le ne:ram?

.....

vi:tata ka:ṇmu: cennetta:maṇu

co:tu kure:kku:ti vacca:l

aṇaṇiṭṭu tirumma:m kara-

liṇitamokkejum ne:ta:m.⁴¹

(Let's go forward fast; it's getting late, don't you see?)

Look! Lights! Home is a few steps farther.

First get there, then relax and fulfil our wishes)

This stirring call for action expressed by the poet consistently in his poems was deeply rooted in his faith in God and in the values that religion fostered. But the religion that Ulloor emphasized was not a narrow one in which rituals dominated and man-made differences were fostered or at least condoned. In one of the most beautiful lyrics in Malayalam the poet speaks ecstatically of the religion of love:

orottamata_mun_ṭulaki, nnujira:m pre:mam; atonnallo:
 parakke nammeppa:lam_rutu:ṭṭum pa:rvaṇa śaśibimbam.
 bhaktja_nura:ga daja:di vapussa:ppara:tma caita_njam
 palamatte:ntippa:ritine_yum praka:śamaru_ḷunnu.⁴²

(This world has one religion-love, world's life,
 The full moon that pours its milky nectar over us.
 Assuming different forms of devotion, love, compassion
 Sheds light over the whole world, the Cosmic Spirit!)

His concept of love is raised to mystic heights here.

Love is a major theme in the poems of Asan, Ulloor and Vallathol. But each one of the trinity has treated it differently. For Asan, love is a pure and sacred sentiment, which transcends even death. Vallathol depicts sensual love in all its splendour and reality. Ulloor has a different and complex concept of love. A close reading of his poems will convince us that his concept of love is a comprehensive one, comprising of love for God, love for the fellow beings, conjugal love, romance, familial love, love for nature, and love for Kerala and India. All these are skilfully woven into the fabric of his poems.

Romance, conjugal love or any other form of physical love is not given much importance in his poems. True to his vision and philosophy, his main concern is with love for God. At the same time, it could not be

identified as sheer piety. While treating love, Ulloor rises to the level of a mystic poet. He identifies himself with God and man:

e:ka:n ña:n bhava:no:tu bhi:tana:j prarhippati-
 lle:ka:nta saukhjaṇṇaḥ:m ravilla:dinaṇṇale.
 e:tiṇa:l samulkaṛṣam sa:dhikkja:menikkennu
 ta:taṇum mata:vuma: maṇalli dharijgunnu?
 e:tu ru:pama:niṣṭṭama: ru:pam va:jkummaṭṭi
 la:diṣilpija:maṇen mṛulpindam vimarddikju:!
 ethrame:l viśudhiḥ pra:picca:l tval pu:Jajkente
 cittata:r svi:ka:rjama:matrame:l viśo:dhikju:.⁴³

(I do not pray in fear to you

To give me nightless days of unmixed joy.

You who are father and mother to me,

You know best what can uplift me.

Whichever shape you prefer,O primal potter,

Into that shape press this lump of clay;

Purify the flower of my mind, my lord,

Until it becomes pure enough to be an offering to you.)

God, to him, is the supreme soul of the universe. He is omnipresent, shapeless and invisible and subsists in all living beings. His theistic inclination is visible in poems like “pre:masamgi:tam,” “sukham

sukham” etc., where he praises God, the omnipresent and invisible. According to the poet, God is love. When he gives himself to God and to His judgment, his poetry gains the romantic subjectivity, which is rare in his poetry. So to love God means to love his creations. This love leads to a spiritual development, akin to that envisaged by William Wordsworth.

“pre:masamgi:tam,” one of the most remarkable poems in the language, can rightly be called the poet’s manifesto of love. The poem rises to mystic heights while dealing with love:

aṭuttunilppo:raṇuJaṇe

no:kka:ṇ akṣikaḷilla:tto:ṛ

kkaṇuru:paṇi:śvaraṇadruśjaṇa:ja:

laṭillaṇa:ścaṛjam? ⁴⁴

(What wonder is there if God, the formless

Is invisible to those

Who do not see their brethren standing by?)

The concept behind the poet’s firm declaration “orottamatamunṭulakinnujira:m pre:mam;” (The world has only one faith—love which is the life of this world), is systematically developed further as: “pada:ṛtha niraṭaṇa prakṛitiJa bha:vam paraspara:kaṛṣam;/ pra:ṇikuḷatiṇ praṭhama:tmaguṇam parasparapre:mam.” ⁴⁵ (The natural tendency of all things is mutual attraction/ all living beings love one

another.) This concept includes in it love of God, love for nature, motherly love, love for the underdogs and the unprivileged and thus culminate in the concept of universal brotherhood.

Ulloor, basically a preceptor, treats physical love cautiously. Both in the cases of Prithwiraj and Sujatha, and Thampan and Kalayani, the heroes and heroines are embodiments of all noble virtues and their affairs are equally virtuous. Here the neoclassical restrictions are quite evident.

Four of his heroines are embodiments of conjugal love: Thara, Bhama, Mrinalini and Malini. The wives are pictured as chaste women who have devoted their lives to the service of their husbands:

tan pati, tan dhanam, tan balam, tan gati

tan paradeivamennu te:ri

sa: vitri tottulla sva: dhikal po: joru

pa: vanaradhajil padam vajpo:r;⁴⁶

(Model wives live happily thinking of their husbands

As their treasure, strength, path and God.

They follow the sacred path of those

Noble ladies like Savithri)

But Ulloor had to face criticism as being conservative and parochial for portraying the women as the servants of their husbands. But his own lines bear testimony to the fact that in this instance again he was

being criticised unjustly. His concept about the status of women in the society was much ahead of his time. He boldly wishes:

puruṣaṇoppam stri:jum sva:tantrjam kaikkollatte
pe:ratte si:ma:daram ranṭuku:tṭarum samam.⁴⁷

(Let woman be free as man

Let both of them enjoy respect alike)

Another criticism is that his women are rather idealistic and lack realistic touch. He might have neglected other aspects in his zeal to idealize and teach, as is the case always. But Ulloor also advises the parents to leave their married children to their own business. They should not make chains to them. What Ulloor demands from the family is love and sacrifice for the harmony of all. He understood the importance of peace and harmony in family and so he tried hard to establish the importance of love and devotion in relations. For example, he reminds us of the love and sacrifice of a mother:

cu:ṭa:n malarum ghanama:j to:nnina do:hada ka:lattil
cumannirippu: durbharagarbham sukhe:na Janajitri.⁴⁸

(The pregnant mother who feels even a flower on her hair

A weight, carries the unbearable weight of child-in-womb in

blithe)

He deals with many other aspects of motherly love in several poems, including uma:ke:ra:lam, “hi:ra,” “oru vi:ramata:v” and “divjasa:ntvanam.” Wordsworth and Ulloor share a close concern and admiration towards children: Ulloor valued the frankness and honesty of children.

prije: ninakkunṇikaḷe pulartta:n

pita:mahan nalkina bahuvali:

makanteji: ma:ntaliṛ me:nijinkal

vajrajudham po:le paticciṭa:mo:? ⁴⁹

(These hands given to you by our celestial father

Are not to harm your supple child, dear

But to rear them up.)

Ulloor was a staunch patriot who loved his country and his state, Keralam. He prays to his mother land:

aṭijaninijumunṭa:m Janmamenna:latella:m

aṭimutal mutijo:lam ninnila:katte ta:je:.

aṭimalariṇa ve:ṇam ta:ṇuva:n, matto:re:ṭa-

aṭijuvatu ṇerukkam mukti sidhikjuvo:lam. ⁵⁰

(If this humble subject gets another life in this world

I pray, mother, be it in your lap from birth to death.

Your feet may support me; let me live here

Till salvation for I could not put up elsewhere)

He has set aside thirty-one couplets in uma:ke:raḷam to describe and to praise Keralam. Through this and other poems, he tries to inculcate love and concern for our state in the mind of the reader. Even though the poet was excessively proud to be the son of mother India, he never fell for narrow-minded patriotism and jingoism:

oru Janapadam matijini, jatil
 śarikju ni:ti taṇ bharāṇavum mati.
 matavum Ja:tijum, niravum lo:katte-
 ppruthakkariccatu mati, mati, mati.
 eḷijavarennum valijavarennu-
 milajil me:loru vibha:game: ve:nṭa
 samastama:jiṭum avasthajinkalum
 samatvam sarvarum sama:śrajikkatte
 murattu de:ši:ja manasthitijute
 śirassil vi:rattejaṇubo:mbokkejum. ⁵¹

(Only one nation we need;

And one administration: of justice.

Don't let religion and caste to mar our harmony

Let there be equality, none being too great or lowly.

Let the atom bomb be dropped on the

Head of narrow jingoism)

Here again Ulloor treads a lone path, no other poet dared to enter.

Even while celebrating the past glory of the motherland, the poet never hesitates to criticize the present situation-the havocs, wreaked by Indians:

ta:je! sakalalo:kaika-

tatva Jñā:na pradi:pike:!

marannupo: j makkalaṅge:

ma:ha:tmjam, mandabudhikaḷ.⁵²

(O mother! Holder of the light of philosophy for the whole-
world,

Your children, who are idiots, have forgotten your greatness)

The country lies in the dirty gutter due to the deeds of the children who are greedy, divided by caste and religion, distressed and spiritually blind. Clearly, Ulloor wants to revive the glories of the past but of course omitting its evils.

Ulloor's patriotism is not narrow-minded jingoism. It borders on internationalism. One who loves his own country can love the whole world. Ulloor believed in the universal brotherhood of all men. He has a clear-cut concept of one world, where there is only one religion: love; one class: human beings; one country: this earth; and one God: the lamp

lighted in the hearts. His guiding principle is the ancient Indian ideal: vasudhaivakutumbakam (universe as one family). The poet has his unique philosophy which envisages this universe as a well knit family. He exhorts in “viJajapra:rthana” (Prayer for Victory):

oru matam matijini-parasne:ha-
 moru vargam mati-manuṣja samJñakam
 oru ra:ṣṭram mati – dhara:talam – namukk--
 oru deivam mati hridisthitam di:pam.⁵³

(From now we have one faith: love for others.

One class—mankind

One country—the whole world

And one God: light lit in one’s heart)

There is a wide spread impression that Ulloor did not portray the burning social or political issues of his time. A careful perusal of his poems will convince the readers that it is not so. He cannot be called a revolutionary poet, as we understand the term now. But as his aim was to make man more human and pure, he opposed and criticized the customs, principles and institutions that hamper human development and progress. Despite his adherence to traditional values, he never hesitated to challenge the social evils like untouchability and caste system. In

caitraprabha:vam, he lashes at untouchability and caste system as propounded by religion:

matamennallitinnu pe:r, matattinte marakjullil
 madam ninnu ka:ttikku:ttum manusjadro:ham⁵⁴

(This cannot be called religion, but the evil done to
 Humanity by haughtiness under guise of religion.)

Ulloor was a sana:tana Hindu who fought fiercely against caste system and caste discriminations throughout his life. His adherence and devotion to the values and moral of ancient Indian culture truly made him a poet of progressive ideals. The more he studied the ancient texts the more he became a liberal.

‘ma:ru’ (Step Aside!) is such a poem, in which he uses the sacred ancient texts to hit out against caste system. It tries desperately to make readers understand that no God or holy scriptures justify the cruel discriminations made by man. He has no qualms to criticize the nobles of the society. He is severely sarcastic in his wrath:

nammalo: mannilttanne nammal tan bhra:ta:kkale -
 dharmmattin pe:rilttallijo:tippo:radvaidikal!
 a:kave narabali Ja:tija:m pisa:cinu
 ha! ko:tikanakkinu nalkuvo:rahimsakar!!⁵⁵

(And we, calling ourselves followers of advaita

Attack our own brethren in the name of dharma;
 We, perpetrators of non-violence, offer millions
 Of humans in sacrifice to the demon called caste.)

His “saubra:traga:nam” [‘Song of Comradeship’ from ta:raha:ram]
 is one of the powerful poems written in Malayalam against the evils of
 caste system:

sambrati Ja:ti, varga vamsa:di bhe:da_yala:l
 kumbh_ini: vakṣassoru kukkuṭajudha:nka_nam
 unṭu Ja:tijil Ja:ti: o:ro:nnumaikjad_rumam
 tunṭu tunṭa:kki:tunna dur_mme:dha: paraśvadham
 and_haku:pattil ku:pam; a:jatil vi:nṭum ku:pam;
 han_ta! na:metra ta:ratta:nṭu po:j sagra_bh_jare:!⁵⁶

(Now the bosom of earth is a field of cockfight

Of castes, classes and races different.

There are castes within caste

Each of which like an axe

Chops up the tree of unity.

We lie deep in the dark cave.

Alas! What a fall for us, brothers!)

In another poem named “ambalakkuḷam,” Ulloor tells us the story
 of an old lady who prevents an untouchable from saving her drowning

grand daughter from death. She says that if he touches the child, she will be deprived of heaven. The poet unleashes severe attacks against such attitudes. ‘Why Not’ written in English, is an outburst of the poet in righteous indignation against untouchability:

Misguided man! How darest thou speak of one-

Thy brother, made by God in his own form:

‘He shall not touch me; I am born to shun

His presence and approach’? Ah! Thrice blinded worm! ⁵⁷

In “nataturakkal” also he criticizes the high caste Hindus for their inhuman attitudes and selfishness. He asks them whether there are separate gods for them and the untouchables. “guruvum sisjanum” is a powerful attack on those who even deny the right of education to the down trodden. Ulloor tried his best to expose the evils and discriminations meted out by the religions in the name of God. Ulloor had the special gift to see into the life around him. Here is the pathetic picture of a pulaja woman suffering from the gnawing pains of poverty:

iva_lkk_u da:ri_dri_aha_lattil me:nme:l

ci_nta:v_jathakka:lakale ce:r_ttu pu:t_ti

deivam tuta_rnnoruravinte ca:lu

ka:_nam cu_lukka:r_nna kapo:labhu:vil.⁵⁸

(Behold her! Her cheeks are wrinkled

As if God has tilled her face with the tiller
 Of poverty tied to bullocks that are
 Depressing thoughts.)

He severely criticises the consumerist cravings of the modern man:

i:ttillavum paṭṭatajum ninaki-
 linṇe:tumanṇe:tum; iṭakju vanna:
 taṇ ca:ṇ vajattiṇ kaṇalinnu katta:ṇ
 trailo:kjamatre virakennu bha:vam! ⁵⁹

(The labour room and the funeral pyre are
 On either sides of man; yet he
 Desires the three worlds as fuel
 For his burning stomach small)

Here one is reminded of the famous simile of Thunchath Ezhuthachan in which humans are compared to a frog crying for food from the mouth of a snake which is about to gulp the frog down.

He was highly critical of the consumerist philosophy or life style of the West. While reading his poems, the readers are inclined to ask the question: “Was he prophesying about the future Indian society too?”

ke:valam dhaṇam bho:gami:raṇṭu deivaṇṇaḷe-
 se:viccu matta:ṭunnu pa:ṣca:tja mahi:talam
 kaivannatonnum po:ra; pinṇejum ve:ṇam; me:ṇme-

la:vaṣjame:rum to:ruma:nandamatinullil!

vja:dhije kaikko:llunnu, bhe:ṣajam se:viccatu

bhe:dama:kunnu; vi:ntum te:tunnu gada:ntaram.

bhra:ntilakadadhva:vil sancarippavarkkunṭo:

ṣa:ntije ṣaṣval saukhiada:trije kka:ṇma:n taram?⁶⁰

(The West adores two Gods—money and pleasure

They are not satisfied with what they have.

Their pleasure is in continuous yearning.

This makes them sick and they take

Medicine, to take up another disease.

They rush about like mad animals

Having no time to attain peace of mind)

Ulloor possessed and professed very great ideals in his life.

oraccaṇammakju piṛanna makkaḷ

o:rtta:lorotta tarava:ttuka:r na:m

.....

sne:hikka na:m namme maṛannu sa:kṣa:l

deivatte:jo:rttatbhutami prapaṇcam

daja:rdrama:m nammute dṛiṣṭiganga

ta:ro:ttu ta:ro:ttorukaṭṭe me:nme:l⁶¹

(Of one family we are; children of the same parents.

Let us forget ourselves and love this wonderful
 Universe in the name of God; let our eyes sympathetic,
 Fall on those who are underneath)

Ulloor tried hard to enrich the Literature and the Language he adored, paying little heed to the heinous criticism based on personal vendetta, says Prof. M.K.Sanu, an eminent Malayalam critic.⁶² He continues that this poet rose to prominence wading through the difficult sands of adverse circumstances. His industry helped him in this. His philosophy was to dedicate his words and deeds for the good of the world. No wonder, he strove hard to encourage and enrich Malayalam Literature facing countless hardships. Even then he had a very clear goal before him, which guided him like a pole star. It was to use his powers and creative faculty for the good of the world he lived in.

He lauds those who serve the world unselfishly. Look at these lines addressed to a raindrop:

kṣaṇa:rdhama:jussanuma:tramangam
 para:rthama:i rantumuriññu taḷḷi
 svaJi:vito:dde:śa nivṛtti te:ṭum
 bhava:ne ña:n de:śikaṇa:ji varippu:.⁶³

(Short is your life and body also
 Yet both are given in service

To others to attain salvation.

You are my teacher and guide.)

He wrote a plain didactic poem “mrina:lini” to spread the message of teetotalism. It ends with a dictum: ‘tinmakalkkella:m tinma lo:kattil madira ta:n/ nanmakalkkella:m nanma patidevatajum ta:n’⁶⁴ (Liquor is the greatest evil in the world/a devoted wife is the greatest bliss)

Internationalism is aptly echoed in ‘innatte lo:kam’ where he prays:

saJi:vama:jullo:ru sarvara:Jja

sakhjam pratiṣṭa:pita ma:jiṭaṭṭe

atinte na:maṣṭraṇakṣaṇattil--

adharmma rakṣassu naṭuṇṭaṭṭe.⁶⁵

(Let an effective league of all nations be established so that

The spectre of evil doings shall tremble with fear to hear its

name.)

He did not spare the burning issues like socio-economic inequalities and all forms of exploitation. He criticizes and ridicules the attitudes of the rich and the powerful. He never fails to praise the goodness and the principles of the poor and the unprivileged. In “Rickshaw,” he asks a cruel rich man whether he is a human being at all. In “paṭakkina:vu,” his attack is even more fierce:

pa:vaṅḡale konnavartan piṇatta:l
 pra:sa:damu:kkil paṇijiccatinka
 kaṭannirikjum khalar tan karutti
 ka:lannu po:lum kajarilla vi:śa:n ⁶⁶

Even Yama, god of death dare not wield his rope
 To bind those savages who, having killed the poor,
 Live in the mansions built of those dead bodies)

Ulloor is critical of the selfishness, miserliness and cruelty exhibited by a section of the society. Poems such as “paṇakka:ran,” “eṇṭe svapnam,” “vica:radha:ra” etc. deal with similar themes and express similar sentiments. They provide the poet with much scope for direct enlightenment. The poet reiterates that no one can claim superiority over others because of their caste, creed, complexion or wealth. Personal greatness lies in the humanitarian values and principles we follow. Equality and fraternity are the two values we cherish in society:

so:daralli na:me:varum? onnalli
 ta:tanum ma:ta:vum nammalkkella:m?⁶⁷

(Are not we all brothers?

Have not we the same father and mother?)

This concern for all is further developed into a sympathy of the down trodden:

ta:ño:r tan samulkkarṣamonnina:l ve:ṇam poṇa:n

va:ño:lam dhara:talam pa:ta:ḷa pa:taṣaṅki ⁶⁸

(This world that may degenerate further shall be

Redeemed only by the rise of the downtrodden.)

In “malake:ral,” the poet puts forward his solution for the salvation of humanity. This is further developed in “aikjaga:tha” included in the collection manimanJuṣa. Fraternity of Humanity forms the philosophical base of the poem. But it goes further to envisage the harmony of all living things.

immaratto:ppile taimaṇikka:ttinte

marṁarava:kjattinarthamento:?

ennajalkka:raṇil ninnu ña:n bhinna

nallennayṁu ninnitu vannurappu:

(What is the meaning of the murmur

Of the gentle breeze in this grove?

It says I am no different from my neighbour.)

The poet moves on to another observation:

tan tirama:la tannocaja: lija:ṛi

saṁtatamento:nnu gho:ṣikkjunnu?

bhu:khaṇdamonninonnanjamallennati-

ta:kave: totṭariñño:tiṭunnu.

(What does this ocean proclaim
 Incessantly to me by the roar of its waves?
 It, touching all the continents tells
 Me that one continent is not different from the other.)

And again:

mandramen hruttatin spandatta:l cejjumi:
 mantro:pade:šattin marmmamento:?
 apparabrahmam ta:n ña:nennu ku:runnu
 ra:ppakalennotennantarja:mi.

(What is the gist of the teaching
 Of my heart's soft beats?
 That I am one with the Supreme Soul
 It tells me day and night.)

The poet says that even our heartbeats tell us to live for others:

praspaṣṭamo:tunnunṭanjarkkai Ji:vippa:n
 hrulspanda vja:Jatta:lanṭarja:mi
 ke:valameṇu ña:n po:kilum ke:lkunna-
 ta:va:kkin ma:ttolijonnu ma:tram..⁶⁹

(My conscience tells me clear as it were
 My heartbeats, to live for others,
 Its reverberations I hear wherever I go.)

He puts self esteem in a higher pedestal even above life: “.... maṇṇil / pra:ṇaṁ al pullu valutonnu nararkku ma:ṇam.”⁷⁰ (Men consider life a mere trinket compared to self esteem which is most important to them.) There can be no scarcity of similar precious jewels imparting knowledge, wisdom and insight throughout his poems.

This short survey of his poems substantiates the supposition that Ulloor is a didactic poet, dedicated to propound the values he cherished throughout his life. This might have done quite harm to the poetic elements. Many critics point out that his poetry is a great treasure house of ideas and that in his hectic endeavour to instruct, his poetry lost its beauty, emotional intensity and imaginative texture. His poems have no personal elements, immediacy of feelings or sense of involvement. These are a few of the shortcomings of the poet from an aesthetic perspective. Ulloor is basically a didactic poet. He had made it clear that it was his intention to express in verse what he thought he should impart to the reader. So a section of critics are of the opinion that it is not proper to evaluate a scholar-poet with the yardstick for evaluating creative poets.

If Ulloor were asked to opt between art and moral teaching, he would certainly choose the second option. He moved his pen to propagate values like goodness, honesty, and virtue etc. He had the firm conviction that such endeavours would never pass as unrecognised.

“namakju ve:nṭi ni: ne:rvaṛijil ninnu

dharmma juddham cejtu to:ttu po:ja:l

po:kaṭṭejattolvi tanne Jajamennu

lo:kam kaṭaṣṣijil sammatikjum[¶]

(The war for what is good

You may lose, but in the end,

Your defeat will be hailed

A victory by the world)

He believed that poetry is essential for the refinement of humanity. A poet must enlighten the readers through his poems. He devoted an entire collection, di:pa:vali to propound moral principles, guidelines and advice. He never left out a chance to depict instances of vigour, love, sacrifice, courage, munificence, patriotism, sense of duty, zeal for hard work, honesty etc. He was never ashamed of the direct moralization and never attempted to garb his didactic fervour in aesthetic conceits. Ulloor differed from Wordsworth in the mode of expression. Ulloor was more outright and straightforward than Wordsworth in regard to the question of moral enlightenment. He had a strong faith and avowed allegiance to the epics, Puranas and The Vedas of India. He achieves an inner relationship with his characters. He partakes in the mental and physical activities of his characters like Milton. He used his characters as his mouthpieces and

propagated his philosophy through them. He adapted myths and epics to suit his ends. Therefore, there are cross allusions and decorations in his poetry.

C.V.Kunjuraman says that if Asan excelled in exalted ideas (a:šajaga:mbi:rjam) and Vallathol in the elegance of ideas (a:šajasaukumarjam), Ulloor was unparalleled for the great vault of ideas (a:šajapauṣkaljam).⁷²

There are charges against him of gross moralization, verbosity, repetition and melodrama. A reader who goes through his poems like “mruṇa:liṇi”, “perija:ttino:ṭu”, “brahmaJña:nam” etc. will find that these charges are not altogether baseless. But his merits are brilliant enough to eclipse such blemishes. He firmly believed in the social commitment of the poet. He is inseparably connected to the eternal values of ancient India and believed that these are the remedies for the miseries of modern man. The longing for sublimity, vigour and vitality and a sense of enthusiasm are the hallmarks of his poetry.

Ulloor firmly believed that instruction is the duty of the poet. What contribute to his greatness are the depth of his thoughts and the heights of aesthetic experience. Ulloor cannot be ignored just because he was an accomplished classicist or an avowed didactic poet. We have seen that even though the didactic strain is primary in his poetry, his poems are of

high merit. This chapter can best be concluded with the words of late Sanjayan (M.R.Nair) on the contributions of Ulloor: “The question ‘What has Ulloor done to Malayalam Literature?’ is best answered by the counter query ‘What has Ulloor not done to Malayalam Literature? Which branch of Malayalam Literature has he not touched, nay, enriched and embellished?’”⁷³

NOTES

¹ Dr. K.M. George, Western Influence on Malayalam Language and Literature. (n. p, 1971) 120.

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³Dr.K.M.George, SahityaVijnanavum Vijnana Sahityavum. (Kottayam: N.B.S., 1983) 163-4.

⁴Dr.K Raghavan Pillai “Ulloor as a Didactic Poet,” Ulloor Smaranika. (Souvenir published to mark the unveiling of the statue of Maha:kavi Ullu:r) ed.Sooranadu Kunhan Pillai (15 May 1981. Thiruvananthapuram) 55.

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⁶ Krishna Chaitanya, A History of Malayalam Literature (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1971) 228.

⁷ O.N.V.Kurup, Kavithayile Vazhithiruvukal (Kozhikkode: Mathrubhoomi Books, 2005) 50.

⁸ K. Ramachandran Nair, Introduction, Selected Poems of Mahakavi Ullur (Trivandrum: Univ.of Kerala, 1978) VII.

⁹ Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran, Introduction to Uma:ke:ralam, Ulloorinte Padyakrithikal, by Ulloor.S.Parameswara Iyer, 2 vols. (Kottayam: N.B.S., 1977) 155-6.

¹⁰ Dr.K.M.George, SahityaVijnanavum Vijnana Sahityavum (Kottayam: N.B.S., 1983) 164.

¹¹ Prof.N.K.Seshan, 'Ulloor's Writings in English' Ulloor Smaranika .

¹² Sahitya Prabhavam, (1927; Thrissur: Kerala Sahithya Academy,1993) 62.

¹³ E.M.S.Namboothirippad, VayanayudeAzhangalil. (Thiruvananthapuram: Chintha, 1997) 133 .

¹⁴ Dr.M.Leelavathy Malayala Kavitha Sahithya Charithram (1980; Thrissur: Kerala Sahithya Academy, 1991) 235.

¹⁵ C.K.Chandrasekharan Nair, "prabha:ṣaṇa:vali—uḷḷu:rum bha:ṣa: sa:hitjavum," Ulloorinte Kavithwam (Kottayam:NBS,1979) 81.

¹⁶ C.Santhakumari, Ulloorinte Bhaktideepika. (Kottayam:NBS, 1986) 46.

¹⁷ Ulloor.S. Parameswara Iyer, "bhaktidi:pika" Ulloorinte Padyakrithikal , 2 vols. (Kottayam: N.B.S., 1977) 230-31. Vol II. All subsequent references are to this edition unless specified otherwise.

¹⁸ Ulloor, "vi:ravaira:gjam" 555 Vol I.

- ¹⁹ Ulloor, “innatte lo:kam” 394 Vol II.
- ²⁰ Ulloor, “saubra:tra ga:nam” 567 Vol I.
- ²¹ Ulloor, “divjasa:ntvanam”. 463 Vol I.
- ²² Ulloor, “innatte lo:kam” 392 Vol II
- ²³ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam” 149 Vol II (Trans. N.K.Seshan)
- ²⁴ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam” 148 Vol II (Trans. N.K.Seshan)
- ²⁵ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam” 148 Vol II (Trans. N.K.Seshan)
- ²⁶ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam” 149 Vol II
- ²⁷ Ulloor, “maha:me:ruvinte manasta:pam” 481 Vol I.
- ²⁸ Ulloor, “ba:ṣpa:nJali” 564 Vol II.
- ²⁹ Ulloor, “sukham sukham” 692.Vol I.
- ³⁰ Ulloor, karnabhu:ṣaṇam . 727.Vol I.
- ³¹ Ulloor, “cappum cippum” 462. Vol II
- ³² Ulloor, “bha:ma” 181.Vol II
- ³³ Ulloor, “vica:radha:ra” 514. Vol I
- ³⁴ Ulloor, “puro:gati” 557. Vol II
- ³⁵ Ulloor, “viJajapra:rthana” 608. Vol II
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- ³⁷ Ulloor, “malake:ral” p 646.Vol II
- ³⁸ Ulloor, “karaccilo:?” 628. Vol II.
- ³⁹ Ulloor, “pojkkolvin” 414. Vol II.

⁴⁰ Dr.K Raghavan Pillai, “Ulloor as a Didactic Poet,” Ulloor

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⁴¹ Ulloor, “munno:ttu” p 644-5. Vol II

⁴² Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam.” 147. Vol II

⁴³ Ulloor, “prabhusamakṣam” 162-3. Vol II. Trans. G Kumara

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⁴⁴ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam.” 148. Vol II

⁴⁵ Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam.” 148. Vol II

⁴⁶ Ulloor, piṅgala 769. Vol I.

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⁴⁹ Ulloor, “bha:vāṇa:gati” 192. Vol II

⁵⁰ Ulloor, uma:ke:raḷam. 381. Vol I.

⁵¹ Ulloor, “Atom Bomb.” 623. Vol II

⁵² Ulloor, “annum innum”. 629. Vol I.

⁵³ Ulloor, “viJajapra:rthana” 608. Vol II

⁵⁴ Ulloor, caitrāprabha:vam. 345. Vol II

⁵⁵ Ulloor, ‘ma:ru’ 187. Vol II

⁵⁶ Ulloor, “saubra:traga:nam” 565. Vol I

⁵⁷ Prof.N.K.Seshan, “Ulloor’s Writings in English” Ulloor

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⁵⁸ Ulloor, “vica:radha:ra” 511. Vol I

⁵⁹ Ulloor, “sukham sukham” 690. Vol I

⁶⁰ Ulloor, citraṣa:la 125. Vol II

⁶¹ Ulloor, “sukham sukham” 691. Vol I.

⁶² Sanu.M.K.Prof, “a:tma:rppanattinte anupama dṛiṣṭa:ntam” Ente

Vazhiyambalagal (Thrissur: Green, 2004) 66.

⁶³ Ulloor, “oru maṛattulli” 561. Vol I

⁶⁴ Ulloor, “mr̥iṇa:liṇi” 174. Vol II

⁶⁵ Ulloor, “innatte lo:kam” 394. Vol II.

⁶⁶ Ulloor, “paṭakkiṇa:vu” 553. Vol II.

⁶⁷ Ulloor, “pullinte collu” 274. Vol II.

⁶⁸ Ulloor, bhaktidi:pika 234. Vol II.

⁶⁹ Ulloor, “aikjaga:tha” 174-5. Vol II.

⁷⁰ Ulloor, ‘saraḷa’ 21. Vol II

⁷¹ Ulloor, “udbb:dhanam” 447. Vol I.

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Recognitions: Dim and Faint

Pradeep Kumar K. “William Wordsworth and Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer:
A comparative study with special reference to didacticism” Thesis. Department
of English, Mercy College Palakkad , University of Calicut, 2009

Chapter 4

Recognitions: Dim and Faint

Comparative Literature, as a branch of Literature, faces a sharp decline in the west. At the same time, literary historians vouchsafe that comparatism in India still enjoys its heyday. According to G.N.Devy, one of the foremost comparatists in India, there are three visible trends in this field:

1. Traditional bilingualism and biculturalism without critical self-awareness; 2. Critical technology imported from the west and perceived as means of modernizing Indian literary study; 3. Multi-lingual literary study in the context of modern Indian languages. ¹

Comparative Literature is an attempt to cross the boundaries of Literature and to establish historical, stylistic and thematic correspondence with other Literatures. It helps to transcend the boundaries of narrow nationalism and to synthesize the best in all Literature. Thus we can attribute a noble aim to comparative approach to Literature. Noted American comparatist Henry H.H.Remak defines Comparative Literature as follows:

Comparative Literature is the study of Literature beyond the confines of one particular country and the study of the relationship between Literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge... In brief, it is the comparison of one Literature with another or others, and the comparison of Literature with other spheres of human expression.²

This definition makes room for comparisons of two literary works at various levels:³

- 1 Aesthetic Standpoint
- 2 Thematic Comparisons
- 3 Generic Comparisons
- 4 Influence Studies
- 5 The Stand Point of Fine Arts
- 6 Comparative Linguistics.

This study is an investigation on the thematic line, of the works of two poets from two different ages and from two different languages. This can be called a “binary study”, which according to Susan Bassnett, is “a study of two authors from two different systems.”⁴

Having discussed the attributes of didactic poetry in general and analyzed the poetic elements of the two poets in the preceding chapters, the investigation now proceeds to discuss the didactic elements in the

poems of Wordsworth and Ulloor, comparing them with each other. This is based on the hypothesis that these two poets have more similarities than differences. What Matthew Arnold propounded as the basis of Comparative Literature is significant in the selection of these two poets apart from the preliminary hypothesis: “everywhere there is connection, everywhere there is illustration”⁵

These two poets hail from the two hemispheres of the globe. They represent two different ages as well as two different cultures, systems and civilizations. All these factors had their say in their poetry and yet we see some indelible marks of similarity between the two poets. Ulloor was born 27 years after the death of Wordsworth. Wordsworth wrote poetry when English Literature was rich and flowering with divergent themes and sources. Wordsworth's poems initiated the Romantic era by emphasizing feeling, instinct, and pleasure above formality and rigid conventions. More than any poet before him, Wordsworth gave expression to inchoate human emotions.

On the other hand Ulloor came to the scene when Malayalam Literature was at its outset. Malayalam Poetry of that time had moralization and other didactic themes as its subject matter. New experiments were being conducted in the area of aesthetic achievements and themes. Ulloor, like Wordsworth, with whom he had many other

similarities, was instrumental in ushering in the era of Romanticism into Literature. If Wordsworth, along with Coleridge, inaugurated a new sensibility in English Literature, with the publication of the Lyrical Ballads, Ulloor appeared on the literary forefront as a classicist and a staunch follower of the Keralavarma School. But later one can discern the influence of Venmani Poets and the Romantic Movement in his poems. According to Dr.K. N. Ezhuthachan, both Ulloor and Vallathol began writing in classical tradition and turned to the new order gradually⁶. karnabhu: sanam is hailed as the index of this change in Ulloor. But the most remarkable similarities between Ulloor and Wordsworth transcend the borderlines of various poetic creeds and also those of place and time.

Both of them had to face many problems and adverse circumstances in their lives, which affected and influenced both the poets and their poetical outlook very much. “Wordsworth the young man was on the whole, solitary, painfully proud, self critical and self suspecting.”⁷ He was quite convinced and determined about his vocation to be a great poet of humanity even at that time. But at the same time, he was doubtful about achieving this because of the circumstances of his life. Poverty, lack of family security, responsibility to and sense of guilt regarding Annette Vallon, lack of circumstances for poetic training—all these left him in depression and dejection.

This was the case of Ulloor too. He also had to bear the burden of family at a tender age, following the untimely death of his father. His first wife died leaving his three children with him when he was just 25. Financial problems were a constant worry for Ulloor. He had to face the stiff resistance of a section of the literary society for a variety of reasons. In short, both the poets felt some sort of insecurity about their vocation from a fairly early stage of their lives.

Even though, Literature was not “an ideology” for them, as Terry Eagleton⁸ was to define later, they believed in the power of influence of Literature and decided to harness it to the maximum. Wordsworth and Ulloor believed that poets and other artists in a wider sense had some duties to perform. They never deviated from this self-assigned endeavour throughout their lives. Neither of them regarded poetry as an end in itself. They had their own philosophies, which determined values for them to impart to the reading public.

Poets are endowed with a mission to build a bridge between this shore of misery, strife, desolation and pain and that of dreams and sunshine. The contention through out the History of Literature was only about the means for this: didactic or aesthetic. The philosophic insight and vision of a poet help him create a new awareness and drive home the noblest ideals of humanity. In the second and third chapters of this study,

the researcher has briefly surveyed the influences on the poetry of Wordsworth and Ulloor respectively. What is attempted in this chapter is a comparison of two eminent poets, celebrated for their poetic endeavour to edify human mind and spirit. It also examines the nature of their moral and ethical stand points and exhortations.

It was Socrates who first asked: 'What is man?' Any question about the meaning of life, which Literature is all about, leads invariably to the grounds of Philosophy. Philosophy is supposed to be a quest after eternal truth and trans-empirical dimensions of reality. The philosophy of art or the study of ideal forms in art alone will not stand up as philosophy in art. All Literature exudes Philosophy. In other words, Philosophy breathes life into works of art. The doctrines and principles may be different from writer to writer. The values upheld in theory are mirrored in Literature. Then the poet and the philosopher become one. So a search for Philosophical influences on Literature is highly relevant.

The readers are familiar with the famous declaration of Wordsworth that he wishes to be known as a teacher or as nothing. He claims that his poems direct the reader to some moral principles and general truths. Thus it becomes very clear that he wrote with some definite purposes and what these purposes are. More over, the poet has made it clear in many of his letters and other writings. His poems are

estimated as having a consoling effect. John Stuart Mill writes that his poetry was a medicine and the “very culture of the feeling” which he was in search of:

In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared by all human beings ... from them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed.⁹

This great facility of his poetry is drawn from nature, as he testifies:

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings:
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous form of things;
We murder to dissect. (25-8)¹⁰

Wordsworth was deeply influenced by the French Revolution and the teachings of Rousseau. In addition to these his pantheistic beliefs also had a deep influence in shaping his own philosophy. He developed it to the extent of a quasi – religion. Wordsworth’s poems are not simple lyrics which emanate from the Aeolian harp of Romanticism. On the contrary, they have a special philosophical blend, “a specific blend of deistic theology, Newtonian Physics and pantheistic naturalism which pervades the Wordsworthian landscape.”¹¹ A detailed study of his philosophy is

outside the scope of this study. But the investigator is concerned with his concept of poetry and poet. He described himself “as a man talking to men.” He fully conceived the heavy responsibility of doing so. He observes in the “Preface” to the Lyrical Ballads (second edition):

. . . habits of meditation have, I trust so prompted and regulated my feelings that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a poet.¹²

Wordsworth is widely known as a poet of Nature. It is not the sensuous manifestations of Nature that delighted him, like other Nature poets. He deals with the inner significance of Nature. He repeatedly assures us that moral enhancement and spiritual solace could be attained only through a life close to Nature. The republican ideals like love, peace and equality are laws that prevail in Nature.

Wordsworth's philosophy of nature can be traced back to those forefathers of western philosophy, the Sophists, through Rousseau. Sophists or those travelling teachers of wisdom reflected on their own thought and nature to find an answer to the imposing questions about the meaning of man's existence. Later Rousseau was to develop this to the doctrine of going back to Nature where no inequalities could be found.

His love of Nature is linked with mysticism. He saw an all-pervading spirit in Nature. Wordsworth believed in Plato's concept of a Soul of the World. He advised men to go to Nature with a heart that watches and receives and in that state of receptivity, to find lessons of morality and wisdom. There is nothing other than the message of Nature to be taught, according to Wordsworth. He prescribed a discourse with Nature for all the miseries of mankind. He says:

Bad is the world, and hard is the world's law
 Even for the man who wears the warmest fleece;
 Much need have ye that time more closely draw
 The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,
 And that among so few there still be peace: (505-9)¹³

He learned to overcome such moods by taking refuge in Nature. He cites his own experiences. His poetry is didactic in that sense.

He was equally a poet of humanity also. Throughout his life, he was very much concerned with the sufferings of human beings, even though his political perspectives changed decisively in the later years. The contemplation of suffering and despair abounds in his poems. He records the sad plight of humanity, with a real sense of sympathy. Thus the children working in cotton factories, old men having no shelter or support, discharged soldiers, female vagrants, beggars, idiots and others

representing the suffering humanity became powerful symbols of the basic elements of human condition, like emptiness and desolation. The capacity to describe them and to relate his emotional response along with it can be called one of his merits as a poet.

He believed that love of nature, properly cultivated would lead to the love of man:

While I was yet a boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, let me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
On man, the heart of man, and human life. (28-32)¹⁴

Like Rousseau he believed that Nature is good and that by nature all men are equal, becoming unequal by regulations of the society. It springs from his conviction that the universe is a super spirit, all pervading and merciful. Nature influences and guides man, if he is willing at all to take lessons from it:

Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our mind impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness. (21-4)¹⁵

What we feel here is the influence of Locke or to be more precise that of Hartley, who insisted that physical sensations are the starting point of the process of intellectual and moral development. Moral and spiritual development is possible only in such a condition. Nature teaches valuable lessons to humanity, like equality, love, purity, innocence etc.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has pointed out in his Eastern Religions and Western Thoughts, that India has performed repeated experiments for the fusion of the divergent races, cults, faiths and philosophies that came into or arose in this land; what worked in this regard and made India home to all was the larger human outlook based on a deeper realization of spiritual values.¹⁶

This is the unique and persistent tendency of Indian civilization. The history of India during at least the last five thousand years has shown a remarkable capacity for such judicious assimilation and synthesis, as well as for appreciation of the universal ideals of humanity. It has ensured a cosmic or universal outlook in its discourses. At the same time it is not forgetting of the rich tradition of India. One can't absorb the good elements of a foreign culture unless one possesses a definite stand point of one's own. Ulloor was a staunch follower of the values and principles envisaged by the philosophers of ancient India. His poems

celebrate the universal fraternity and internationalism as propounded by India.

saJi:vama:jul̥lo:ru sar̥vara:Jja-
 sakhjam pr̥atiṣṭṭa:pitamajit̥te,

 cara:caram sar̥vavumekani:dam
 sakṣa:l parabr̥ahmamakhaṇdamenna:ji
 nissamśajam tan̥ munivarjaro:ti
 niri:har̥,niṣkin̥canar̥,nitjaśuddhar̥
 pra:ci:n̥ama:ma:parama:r̥thas:aram
 pra:jo:gabhu:vil pr̥asaricitumbo:l̥
 manuṣjan̥issandhijil ma:lijattum
 madaJvaro:pap̥lavam astamijkkum.¹⁷

[Let an active league of nations come to being!
 The whole world is one nest; the cosmic Soul is
 One undivided self, says the sages of India
 Who are ascetics, penniless and ever pure.
 If this ancient wisdom radiates in the land
 Man will be saved from this reckless race.]

The ancient philosophical treatises of India, namely The Upanishads tell us about the cosmic soul, Brahman. Man is a part of that

supreme soul. The Svetasvatara Upanishad, one of the later Upanishads in point of time, takes us further into an understanding of Brahman:

What is perishable —the body, for example—is primary matter says the Upanishad. What is immortal and imperishable is Hara (the Self) and over perishable and the self, the one God rules. To know that the eternal (the Atman, Brahman) was present in the Self, to acknowledge that there was nothing higher than that to be known, was to know all. Running through all Upanishads like a golden thread is the single theme that man is not to be distinguished from all other things—animate or inanimate, that within man is the great principle of the universality of the Self, that in the understanding of the self lies the understanding of what life is all about.¹⁸

Ulloor had drunk deeply from the rich fountain of Indian Philosophy. The all embracing universality of Indian mind has worked on him also.

appuram tuccana:mente—

jakama:ma:lilajkkume:l

brahma:ndatte vahicciṭum

pre:ma:tma:va:kumi:ṣvaran

cara:carasamu:hatte

sauharddhappattunu:lina:l

ce:rttiṇakki viḷayunna

citrāma:m ka:ṛca kaṇṭu ṇā:n.¹⁹

Then I saw God who is love, carrying the whole universe.

I saw Him who binds all living things with the silken thread

Of friendship shining with all glory in my humble being.

Uloor never leaves out an occasion to sing in praise of the culture and values propounded by the sages and scholars of Ancient India (a:ṛṣa bha:ratam). As mentioned elsewhere, if Wordsworth can be called a poet of Nature, Uloor is entitled to get the title of the poet of morals and values of Ancient India. He had the firm conviction that all that are valuable to be imparted to the readers are there in the Literature of Ancient India viz. Epics, Puranas, The Vedas and Vedanta (Upanishads). Thus he makes use of the story of Karna to establish the importance of sacrifice and munificence. He does not merely relate stories from these sources, but interprets them too, to drive home the ideals that are dear to him. It is true that more often than not, these endeavours misfire due to his over enthusiasm to preach. But he neither cares about this, nor worries about the lapses happened in the poetic structure. He believes that, whatever is the theme and the way of presentation, a good poet should

concentrate on enlightening people with valuable insights and advice. In short, the subject matter and aesthetic factors should be subservient to the precepts.

Ulloor wrote about the function of a poet:

nabho:ma:rgattilemmaṭṭil – nakṣatraṇṇaḷ viḷaṇṇumo,

subha:ṣitaṇṇaḷammaṭṭil - śobhippu ka:vjavi:thijil

maṇo:haranṇaḷajori: - mahadvakṇaḷenniye

mattentullu maṇuṣjarku – ma:rgadi:paṇṇaḷu:rijil

addi:pa:vali ṇa:ṇalpam adhvaganma:rku kaṭṭiṭam;

e:tanṭiṭajku kattijkkam entejum kaivilakkukaḷ (21 - 26) ²⁰

How the stars twinkle in the milky way,

Thus the dictums shine in poetry.

These beautiful dictums are the lone light

Houses to men in this world

I wish to show this light to others

And I will light my own lamps

He wrote about traditional values like the significance of good deeds, munificence, courage, love etc. Critics termed his philosophy as religious humanism. To him God is omnipresent and formless. He calls it love. The foci of Ulloor's philosophy are 'Karma', piety, and love. 'Karma' or deed has a pivotal role in his thoughts. Man must do his duty

without desiring rewards, Ulloor advises in the line of the Bhagavad Gita (The Song of God). Our enthusiasm is the decisive factor of our success or failure. Enthusiasm combined with sincere deeds will remove all the obstacles from our paths. Our deeds must be beneficial to others. We must do our duty even when confronted with death. Optimism, service, sacrifice, diligence etc. are some of the values preached by Ulloor.

Ulloor's concept of Nature is strictly neo- classical. If his love of Nature reveals anything to us, it is his didactic enthusiasm. He never seems to be charmed by Nature, like his contemporary, Vallathol Narayana Menon. He certainly has written on Nature and things like the sun, the moon, rivers, hills trees, moonlight, stars, dewdrops etc. Nature for him is a backdrop of human action, having no soul or spirit. He advises man to learn from Nature, not its message as Wordsworth puts it, but as how God envisaged it to be :

iruppavanum malar gandhame:kum

vettunnavanum taru cu:takattum

hanippavanum kili pa:tu pa:tum

paro:paka:ra pravanam prapanacam ²¹

(Flower gives fragrance to those who pluck it.

Tree lends shade to the woodcutter

The bird sings melodiously to the hunter

Benevolence is the driving force of Universe)

Love is a long cherished ideal to both the poets. Wordsworth, like Ulloor, had very little to sing of romantic love. He derives the principle of universal love from Nature:

Love, now a universal birth,

From heart to heart is stealing,

From earth to man, from man to earth:

- It is the hour of feelings. (21-4) ²²

The power of love to heal the wounds of man has been correctly recognized and acknowledged by the poet. Wordsworth apprehended the law of Nature as 'love'. Love is combined with duty. "The Thorn", "The Mad Mother", "The Idiot Boy" etc. have love as the main theme. His love is a passionate affection, as we can see in 'Michael', 'The Brothers' etc. Sir Grierson remarks that this love, in a sense, "sympathy with his fellowmen and desire for their welfare-that is the key note of all his poetry, the source and inspiration of the joy . . ." ²³

To the surprise of the reader, Ulloor propounds the same view of love in his famous "pre:masamgi:tam". Love is the unifying spirit of the universe, the facets of which are love for God; love for one's country, parental love, conjugal love, and sympathy to others. His concept of love

is based on the love for God and love for the Universe. His opposition to caste-system, untouchability, racial prejudices, inequality, discriminations and other social evils are based on this perspective. Both the poets had an exalted sense of love. Wordsworth says in “Laodamia” that love should not be an expression of sensual pleasures:

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend –
 Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
 Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
 For this the passion to excess was driven
 That self might be annulled: (146-50) ²⁴

Wordsworth can be called a mystic poet in the sense that he finds out, in his poems, a silken thread of the unity of Man, Nature and God. His recognition of an all pervading spirit immanent in all things and his conviction that a communion of man with nature leads him to a higher realm of bliss, which can be called the realization of God, were parts of his pantheistic faith. It was the result of many influences. For instance, association with the ideas of Spinoza helped to enrich his naturalistic concepts. Spinoza commented that God is not extraneous but immanent which prompted Coleridge to describe as a confusion of God with Nature. Spinoza identified Nature as the underlying reality of life and universe, which he called substance. He envisaged Nature as an active and vital

process. To him, the fixed and unchangeable laws of Nature and the eternal decrees of God are the one and the same reality. This is what he wanted to communicate through his poetry. One has only to go through the poems of Wordsworth to know how great the influence of Spinoza was. Even during the period of his later orthodoxy, the undertones of such an influence can be discerned.

This can be called another meeting ground of the poets. Both believed in the existence of God, but in different ways. It was also different from the common canon. Ulloor firmly believed that there was no better way to God other than service to others. According to him one who forgets the basic values and principles like, piety, love, kindness, sacrifice, charity etc. cannot hope for salvation.

It may seem that Wordsworth is not specific in pointing out or propagating any concrete ideals. He is more interested in the means as a whole; the way of Nature. He is concerned with human life as a whole. And he wants to “console the afflicted.” For this he puts forward an integrated approach through the love of nature. Guidance of nature is essential for humanity and that alone will suffice. Other philosophical and moral standpoints of the poet are fundamentals of this. At the same time love, morality, joy etc. can be identified as the guiding principles of his philosophy.

Wordsworth had strong Republican convictions. He was much influenced by the ideals of French Revolution: liberty, equality and fraternity. Rousseau and his radical disciples wanted to destroy the degenerated social set up and build a new order which would be guided by the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. Wordsworth was attracted more to the romantic ideals of Rousseau than to the reasoning of Voltaire. Even though he denounced the revolution later, the ideals imbibed had a lasting influence on his mind and outlook. The revolutionary fervour, political outlook and the romantic sensibility made William Wordsworth a great champion of the suffering humanity. He believed in the intrinsic nobility of human beings. To see 'the generations low in dust' was painful to him. According to him all human beings are equal. He laments thus the sad plight of the multitude: "...Not for these sad issues / Was man created ; but to obey the law/ Of life, and hope, and action." (126-8) ²⁵

Throughout the poems of Wordsworth, the readers can see a deep love for the rustic, the rustic life and their simple and direct ways and language, which can be traced back to Rousseau. According to the poet, the elementary feelings found in the humble and rustic life were the purest and simplest. This is so because of the influence of Nature, which

lends its energy to them. Thus man and Nature are one and the same. This was a truth, which he sought throughout his life.

Ulloor also contemplated that his poetry should stand for those who needed it the most. A common impression was that he was a staunch supporter of royalty and other traditional institutions and values. But a careful perusal of his poems like “ente svapnam”, “vica:radha:ra”, “Rickshaw,” “panakka:ran,” “tumbappu:v”, “pullinte collu” and “patakkinavu” will convince one that Ulloor was not a poet of ivory tower despite the high offices he held. He was very keen to sing of the poor. He bravely came forward for the cause of the downtrodden. He never hesitated to criticize the rich and the powerful for their avarice and cruelty. He made fun of their piety and charity to temples. In “nataturakkal” he severely ridicules those who came to the temple to pay obeisance to the deity:

panam kilukkija:l bhagava:n nidra vi—
 ttunarnnerunnelkkum utanenno:rkkuvo:r;
 totalum ti:ntalum akaluva:n ve:nti —
 jittajku pojkajum kinarum te:ttuovo:r
 atikrisamati vibhu, avittutte —
 catikkilumentennu ninaccattukkuvo:r;
 tanikkillenkilum tarakke:ti, llanja-

naṇayola: śubhamatinnu ku:ppuvo:r;
 kaṛijum maṭṭella:m parare drohippa:n
 vaṛipa:ṭoro:nnu muṛajḱku ne:ruvo:r;²⁶

Some think that God shall awake to the noise of their gold

sovereigns

Some perform ablution for they touched low caste in temple

Some think of cheating God who may be simpleminded

Some pray for distress to others, not for a boon to the self

Some perform offerings to harm others as possible.

He reminds them that these are of no use and they cannot please God, for God is with the poor. He was also with the poor. See how strongly he argues for the weaker section of the society:

sva:tanṭṛjama:m va:ju cilarkkuma:tram
 svaṣikuvaṇullo:ru vastuvalla.
 mahi:talam ti:ṛttatu viśvaṣilpi
 mallante va:sattinu ma:tramalla.²⁷

(Freedom is not an exclusive luxury for a few.

God not for the mighty alone made this world.)

Wordsworth once asked a skylark: “Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?”²⁸ Later he offered praise and wished peace to those:

. . . who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood.
 Praise be to such. . . (136-41) ²⁹

Love, peace, equality, fraternity and simplicity were some of his ideals in youth. He added neoclassic ideals like order, duty, security etc. to them later. For example, "Ode to Duty", which is the most didactic of his poems, tells us about the necessity of performing our duty for moral discipline. He addresses duty:

Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe;
 From vain temptations dost set free;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity! (5-8) ³⁰

The socio-political standpoints of the poet are recorded in his poems. But in general we can say that his philosophy is the vision of Nature. His deep insight into human life is reflected in his didactic poems. Being a profoundly earnest and sincere thinker, he displayed a high seriousness which is at times comparable to that of Milton, but at the same time tempered with tenderness and love of simplicity.

As a true romanticist, Wordsworth's main concern was with man. Ulloor was less interested in man as man than in his relationship with God and his fellow beings. The ethics and values of Ancient India were to Ulloor like what Nature was to Wordsworth. He wrote of universal love:

orotta matamuntulakinnujira:m pre:mamatonnallo:
parakke namme palamrutu:ttum pa:rvaṇa śasibimbam.³¹

Love, the only one religion, is the world's life

A nectar fallen to us from the full moon's bliss.

In some of his works, Wordsworth is preoccupied with the glory of the past that has gone forever. In "London, 1802," the speaker exhorts the spirit of the centuries-dead poet John Milton to teach the modern world a better way to live:

England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! Raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power. (2-8)³²

Here the poet reiterates the power of poetry and poets. He calls upon Milton, the great poet to redeem them for, his “soul was like a star, and dwelt apart.”³³

Wordsworth, befitting a true romanticist, found solace in glades and bowers. This investigation has already discussed the poet’s brief stint as a sympathizer of revolutionary ideals. Moreover, he was an idealist and a seeker of beauty. His poetry attracted millions of readers by beauty and originality His verse celebrates the moral influence exerted by Nature on human thoughts and feelings. He never attempted to make a direct didactic approach or preached any dos and don’ts. For him, making the reader delighted was an instruction in itself. A.C.Bradley rightly points out:

It was a part of his endeavour to find something of the distant ideal in life’s familiar face. And though this attitude of sympathy and humility did become habitual, the first bent towards grandeur, austerity, sublimity, retained its force....Wordsworth is indisputably the most sublime of our poets since Milton.³⁴

Wordsworth aimed at rather high and abstract things. Though he was a didactic poet, he did not preach from a high pedestal, but on the

other hand he was near to console and heal. His aim was to make life fuller and saner.

In contrast to Wordsworth, Ulloor was not satisfied with such a subtle approach. With the same vigour of singing of his dear ideals like munificence, love, piety etc. he wrote elaborately about the importance of being clean and tidy too. Wordsworth never went to such details. Ulloor was a thorough moralist. He was careful and diligent enough to give pieces of advice concerning even trivial, day-to-day matters like food and clothing. Here is a fine example:

de:ham,vasanama:ha:ram, – ge:ham tottullatokkejum
malinjamatirippo:rkke: – ma:nasam suddhi vanni:tu ³⁵

The bliss is to those who are clean in body

Dress, food and their houses.

He was a realist, out in the public to help people live a life, which he felt they should lead. He was ready to go to any end to impart a moral lesson. For instance we have his much-ridiculed poem “mrina:lini” penned with the good intention of enlightening people about the evil of drinking. He never showed any sign of revolutionary or reformative ardour. It may be because he was a government servant. Moreover his balanced and peaceful temperament might have exerted its influence. But certainly Ulloor could be credited with a progressive outlook.

Wordsworth's poetry has its simple, undeniable force and freshness, while Ulloor's is beautiful and elegant. If Wordsworth gives due importance to all senses, Ulloor's poems are verbal treats. Wordsworth was a more consummate artist, while Ulloor was a scholar who proved his mettle as a poet. Ulloor had a wonderful command over language and was gifted with the ability for hard work. These faculties he utilized fully for poetic composition.

While the moral exhortations of Wordsworth took on the appearance of Neoclassical ideals in the later poems, Ulloor showed an inclination towards Romanticism although his poetry remained highly objective even then. There was a widespread criticism that the poetic genius of Wordsworth began to wane as he advanced in age and as he discarded his former liberal and radical perspectives. As it has already been discussed else where in this study, this phenomenon has political, artistic and philosophical roots. Will Durant attempts an explanation for the conversion of Wordsworth to conservatism:

The first half of the nineteenth century was the age of pessimism. All Europe lay prostrate. The revolution was dead; and with it the life seemed to have gone out of the soul of Europe. ... was this almost universal calamity the vengeance of a just god on the age of reason and unbelief?

Was it a call to the penitent intellect to bend before the ancient virtues of faith, hope and charity? So Schlegel thought ... and Southey, and Wordsworth and Gogol; and they turned back to the old faith like wasted prodigals happy to be home again.³⁶

Thus it is clear that the later retreat of the poet from his radical ideas have something to do with the philosophical crises too. Ulloor had to face this charge from fairly an early stage of his poetic career. This study does not seek to vindicate him.

So we can conclude with the comment that there is the difference of indirect teaching and direct moralization between Wordsworth and Ulloor. Wordsworth is a didactic poet as he is a mystic, a nature poet, and a poet of humanity and of solitude. But Ulloor is primarily a didactic poet, giving out precepts and maxims as a theologian or spiritual leader. It must be added that he is a gifted poet.

It is a common practice to attack these poets and their poems because they try to explain the problems of life or provide solutions for them. It is true that we expect much more from poetry nowadays. Perhaps the sensibility and concept of poetry have undergone sea changes. But that is not an excuse to be oblivious of the finest aspects of didactic

poetry, like that of these two poets. What A.C.Bradley observes about the perpetual influence of Wordsworth, is relevant in the case of Ulloor too:

And the reason is that they find his way of seeing the world, his poetic experience, what Arnold meant by his 'criticism of life' to be something deep, and therefore something that will hold. It continues to bring them joy, peace, strength and exaltation. It does not thin out or break beneath them as they grow older and wiser; nor does it fail them, much less repel them, in sadness or even in their sorest need.³⁷

Wordsworth was a poet who came to sing and he taught through his songs. Ulloor was a scholar who had to teach. He chose to sing so he could teach.

NOTES

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¹⁹ Ulloor, "bhu:takkanna:ti." 374 vol. 2.

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²¹ Ulloor, "sukham sukham" 692. Vol 1

²² Wordsworth, "To My Sister" 575.

²³ Herbert Grierson and J.C. Smith, Milton and Wordsworth--Poets and Prophets (London: Chatto and Windus, 1956) 182.

²⁴ Wordsworth, "Laodamia" 249

²⁵ Wordsworth, The Excursion 1048.

²⁶ Ulloor, "naṭaturakkal" 377.

²⁷ Ulloor, "paṭakkiṇa:vu" 556.

²⁸ Wordsworth, "To a Skylark" 246.

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³⁰ Wordsworth, "Ode to Duty" 587.

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APPENDIX

Glossary of Non-English Words

Purana - an encyclopaedic collection of myths, legends and genealogy in Hinduism. Composed in verse, they date from A.D. c 400 to c.1000. There are 18 principal Puranas exalting Vishnu, Shiva or Brahma. pa:ttu - Songs

kilippa:ttu - Bird's Song : A type of Dravidian versification in which a bird is supposed to sing the verses.

tullal -A kind of dance performed in temples, invented by Kunchan Nambiar.

maha:ka:vja - Great Poem of epic standards: Poem with all characteristics described in poetics.

eṭṭuvi:ṭṭil Pillaimar-The eight feudal lords of erstwhile state of Travancore.

kirāṇa:vali - A flood of rays.

maṇimanJuṣa - A flower basket; jewel box.

ta:raha:ram - A garland of stars.

taraṇiṇi - River

amrutadha:ra - Flow of nectar.

di:pa:vali - Festival of light.

taptahṛidajam	-	Sorrowful heart
hṛidajakaumudi	-	Enticing heart.
kalpaśa:khi	-	The celestial tree.
aruṇo:dajam	-	The dawn.
ratnama:la	-	Necklace of gems.
pre:masamgi:tam	-	The music of love.
vica:radh:ara	-	Stream of thoughts;Deliberations
bharati:japra:rthana	-	An Indian prayer
viśvaviJajam	-	The conquest of Universe
uma:ke:raḷam	-	Keralam of Queen Uma.
ra:macandraṇvilasam	-	The name of Ramachandra
kaṇṇabhu:ṣaṇam	-	Ornament of Karna.
piṅgaḷa	-	Woman with golden complexion
citro:dajam	-	Rising of King Chithira Thirunal
vanci:śagi:ti	-	A song in praise of King of Vanci.
chaitraprabha:vam	-	The majesty of King Chithira Thirunal (former ruler of the princely state of Travancore).
bhaktidi:pika	-	The light of piety.
khaṇḍaka:vjam	-	A short poetic work.
citraśa:la	-	The gallery of portraits.

- ba:ladi:pika - Light for Children
- sada:ca:radi:pika - Light of Morals
- campu - Cante Fable (Glossary: State Languages Institute); a poem with a mixture of verse and prose.

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A comparative study with special reference to didacticism” Thesis. Department
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